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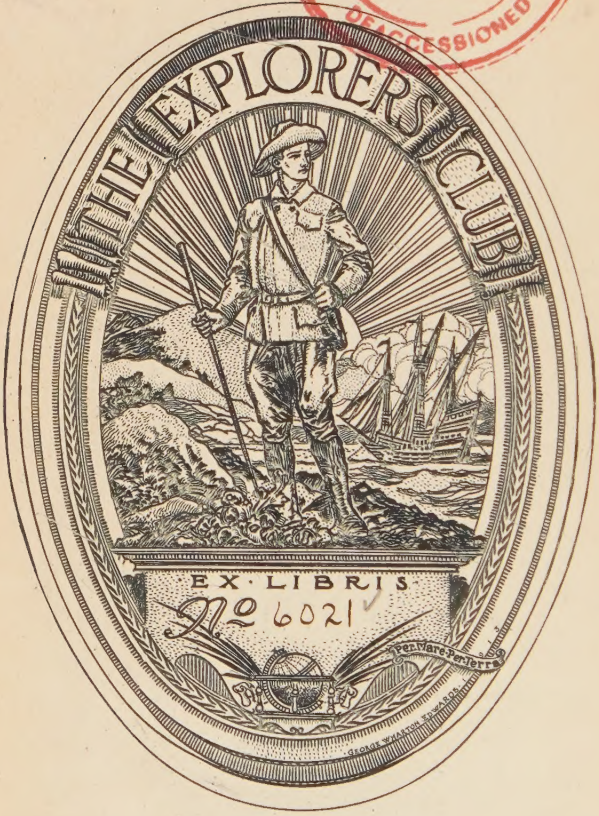

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Round Stone Pillars at Dheemahpoor Assam.

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TRAVELS AND ADVENTURES

IN THE

PROVINCE OF ASSAM,

DURING A RESIDENCE OF FOURTEEN YEARS.

BY

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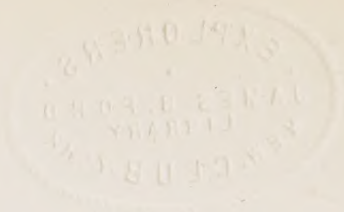

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PREFACE.

THE present volume, which is a continuation of the author's former work "A Sketch of Assam," is intended to describe the habits, customs and manners of the remaining wild tribes of the hills, viz., Angahmee Nagahs, Kookies, Meekirs, and Rengma Nagahs, with whom a lengthened residence rendered him intimately acquainted.

The adventures and travels will also illustrate the life of an officer in the civil employ in Assam. The work concludes with a statistical account of the amount and mode of realizing the revenue, and the physical and moral condition of the people of the district of Now-Gong. As the Indian Government has been pleased to allow the author to derive his information from official correspondence, its authenticity may be relied on, and he entertains a hope that his labours will not be deemed uninteresting or valueless.

1854.

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

A SKETCH OF ASSAM:

With Some Account of the Hill Tribes.

BY AN OFFICER

IN THE HONOURABLE EAST INDIA COMPANY'S BENGAL NATIVE INFANTRY IN CIVIL EMPLOY.

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THE KUPPAH CHOOR AKHAS.
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TRAVELS AND ADVENTURES IN ASSAM.

PART I.

AN EXPEDITION IN THE HIGHLANDS OF ASSAM.

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Introduction—Passage up the Burrompooter—Duties of a Civil officer in Assam—A night in the jungle—A novel raft—Dangerous situation—A pleasant surprise—Removal to Now-Gong—Preparation for an expedition into the Angahmee Nagah country.

In the year 1841, it was my good fortune to be appointed to the Civil branch of the service as an Assistant to the Agent to the Governor-General, North-East Frontier, Assam ; and after a residence of about three years in Lower Assam, in the month of February, 1844, I was placed in charge of the Hill tribes subject to the Political Agent of Upper Assam. Here, again, it fell to my lot to take up my residence with my family at the desolate

and remote station of Saikwah, on the banks of the Burrompooter.

A dreary trip of six weeks' tracking up against a rapid stream, with heavy west-country boats, brought us to our destination in the month of April. On our arrival we were fortunate in meeting with a small bungalow, made of bamboos, grass, and reed walls; but it was void of the luxury of a door or glass window. Having frequently before felt the discomfort of being without windows, I had learned experience, and took the precaution of carrying with me, wherever I went, two windows, one for a sitting and one for a bed-room. The rainy season being close at hand, we made ourselves as comfortable as circumstances would admit, by laying down bamboo mats to protect us from the damp earth floor; and having plastered the outside reed walls with mud, we vainly imagined we were securely sheltered for some time to come. But we know not what a day may bring forth.

In June, the Burrompooter river began to undermine the bank on which our house was built; and though we were one hundred and fifty yards distant from the brink or edge of the bank, the current was so strong that in a few days it rapidly advanced upon us, sweeping away ten

paces of the bank three or four times in the course of the day, and as a stupendous mass of earth fell with a crash into the bosom of the stream, sounding on our ears like the report of cannon, we received a timely warning to effect our retreat. The river at last came within thirty paces of our door, and being doubtful whether the house would remain on dry land another night, we hastily decamped with all our baggage to the residence of the Commandant of the post further in the rear to the south, nearer to the jungle, and thankful were we for the shelter thus afforded us, till we prepared a room as a temporary arrangement at one end of the Kutchery, or court for public business. A week after we left our abode, the site of our old house was in the middle of the river; and we had not been many days in our new dwelling, when we were again destined to be summarily ousted. The river continued to advance and cut away the bank; we, therefore, had no alternative but to retreat further inland close to a dense forest, and erect a small hut or house in the best way we could, six paces from Colonel White's grave, which was the only cleared high ground available for a dwelling.

It was in the midst of the rainy season (July);

torrents of rain fell daily, and the country being inundated, reeds could with difficulty be procured for the walls of our new abode, and we were in the utmost apparent discomfort. We had erected a two-sided grass roof, and put the kanats, or sides of our tent, round the posts, to answer the purpose of walls; but we were so happy in escaping to the jungles beyond the reach of the merciless river, that we thought nothing of discomfort; on the contrary, we diligently employed our time in improving our position, and in a few days we felt as settled and comfortable as we should have been in the best brick house in Assam.

As past experience had taught us never to repine at what cannot be helped, we only enjoyed the more the comforts Providence had placed within our reach. That a soldier should be exposed and suffer privation is a matter of course, and always expected; but when I saw a lady and child put to these shifts, without a house, exposed to the wind and rain day and night, in the midst of the rainy season, and in what has been truly termed a howling, desolate wilderness, I could not help thinking how many English wives too little know what they enjoy at home; and that in order to be grateful, and to duly appreciate the comforts of life, it is

necessary to be deprived of them for a time, when we become sensible of the happiness already enjoyed, but hitherto not sufficiently valued.

The onerous and responsible duties of a Military officer in Civil employ in Assam can scarcely be imagined; he is expected to do everything. The Principal Assistant of a District is Judge, Magistrate, and Collector. For six months in the year he is constantly travelling about the country, inspecting roads, causing them to be repaired, opening new ones, instituting local fiscal inquiries from village to village, enduring great fatigue, exposed to many perils from climate, wild beasts, and demi-savages in the hills. In one tour well do I recollect an incident that befel me after a long day's march, on reaching my encampment close to a Thannah or Police outpost. I had made myself comfortable for the night in a snug little travelling tent by about ten P. M. A violent storm, attended with heavy rain, hail, lightning, and thunder, came on. It was a dismally cold and wet night, and I was congratulating myself on my good fortune in having brought a capital tent, when, suddenly, a shrill shriek from the riding and baggage elephants made me aware that they had become alarmed, and had fled to the jungle.

The roar of the elements, however, was so great that no orders could be given for their capture; for every servant had taken refuge from the storm in the huts in the market or village. At this moment a sudden gust of wind blew down my tent upon my bed; I was compelled to crawl out and make the best of my way, through torrents of rain, to the Police outpost or Thannah, which was close by.

On entering the building I was astonished to see the whole establishment of Ticklahs, or Policemen, unconcernedly sitting round a log wood fire on the ground. I had scarcely joined this snug party, and exchanged my wet clothes for a dry sheet to wrap round me, when the building was, by a sudden gust of wind, blown to the ground, and we all escaped uninjured under the platform or changs erected round the room as seats. Luckily the roof did not fall flat, or we should have been crushed to death. Our peril, however, was very great; we could not extricate ourselves, and there was every prospect of the roof catching fire, and of our being burnt to death. We succeeded in partly smothering the flames by scraping up the earth floor with our hands, and throwing it on the fire; still the horror of our position was dreadful;

every flash of lightning showed us too vividly the danger we were in, and the darkness succeeding the lightning rendered all efforts to escape unavailing. In this interval of despair we at last discovered a small hole in the roof, by which we all effected our escape, deeply grateful for our miraculous preservation in not being crushed by the falling building, or reduced to cinders by a roaring log wood fire. The next morning the elephants were found and captured on the other side of the Boree Dulung river, having fled in the hailstorm and swum across the river, though their legs were bound with heavy chains.

Shortly after this adventure I was called on to return to Central Assam, to assume temporary charge of the Tezpore Division, and, as west-country boats are seldom met with in Upper Assam, I had no alternative but to convey my baggage down the Burrompooter by some other expedient. I accordingly procured two canoes, tied them together, and, constructing a tolerable sized raft, put the whole of my traps on it, and set out without a day's delay. For my own accommodation the common Khel-nao, or pleasure-boat of the country, was all I desired, which being about fifty feet long and three and a half feet

wide, with a grass roof over a portion forming a sleeping berth, and only permitting a reclining or sitting posture, sufficed for a rapid journey of 200 miles.

All went well for the first day, excepting that I parted company with the baggage raft. The next night the boatmen and servants slept on the open sand which formed the bed of the river in the rains, and the boat being apparently securely fastened to a stake driven in on the edge of the river, I retired to rest at an early hour. In the middle of the night I was awakened by the bubbling noise of water and the rolling motion of my boat, and, on getting up to see what was the matter, I found I was drifting down the middle of the Burrompooter, rapidly passing prostrate trees and stumps, and that I had only one servant asleep in the front part of the boat, and he, like myself, knew not how to swim.

In this dilemma there was no time to be lost; I accordingly put on my red woollen nightcap and pea-coat, seized a paddle, and set to work and rowed most heartily, placing the servant in the stern of the boat to steer with an oar. In an hour, however, the skin peeled off my hands, and, for a while, I was obliged to bide my fate with patience, and

watch the progress of the boat as she drifted past prostrate trees, and whirled round and round in the numerous eddies, or whirlpools, which render the Burrompooter so dangerous. As our safety, however, depended on my exertions to reach the shore, in a few minutes I again set to work with my paddle or oar, and, after the night was nearly gone, I at last had the satisfaction of seeing that I was near the high bank of Dikhoo Mookh. Another quarter of an hour's struggle enabled me to bring the boat under the bank, but the current was so rapid that I could not bring to, or stop the boat, and for some time I was in imminent danger of being crushed to death under the bank, which frequently fell in with an awful report or crash. Nevertheless, the danger of the open river was equally bad; so, as a last resource, I ran the head of the boat on the first projecting point of the bank we met with, and, instantly jumping on shore, fastened a rope round a root of a tree and brought my boat to for the night.

The next morning I fired a gun, and my servants and boatmen, who were left behind on the sand bank, having procured a canoe, joined me through the fog, wondering how I had escaped so perilous a night's journey caused by their carelessness in

not fastening my boat securely. My baggage raft was still less fortunate, for it was wrecked in a storm on the sand bank at Beshnauth. Some of my baggage was lost, and all that was saved was much damaged. My little stock of books had now been drenched in both the Ganges and Burrompooter, in following me in my travels through India. In these wild, remote lands, where books are our greatest friends, for once I felt my comforts had been abridged on this occasion, and, on first hearing of the incident, my equanimity was somewhat tried; but, having reached the end of my journey, Tezpore, the discomforts of the trip were soon forgotten.

After a few months' residence at Tezpore, on the north bank of the Burrompooter, it was again my fortune to be removed to the permanent charge of the Now-Gong District in Southern Central Assam. I received the order in the month of August, in the midst of the rainy season; and the centre of the valley, about thirty miles wide, having to be crossed, and being under water, there was no way of joining my new station except by boats, and these were not procurable. In this dilemma, we, as usual, had recourse to our khel-nao, or pleasure-boat, which we roofed in for eighteen

feet, and thus formed two rooms three and a half feet wide by nine feet long, and three feet high. As I was accompanied by my wife and a child of three years old, there was little room to spare; however, as we were not accustomed to make mountains of molehills, we set out, after two days' preparation, and were actually four days, by a circuitous route, in reaching the station of Now-Gong.

Never shall we forget what we endured from the heat and musquitos; the thermometer had risen to ninety-six degrees, and the famed Kullung river swarmed with musquitos; and, as we were not able once to put foot on shore, we were well nigh devoured by the voracious and venomous insects. We were literally scarred from head to foot with sores; but out of evil good is produced; we enjoyed only the more the comfort of a mud plastered house without doors or windows, and conceived we had good reason to be grateful that the trial of patience had been but of short duration, and that a store of contentment was laid in likely to endure for some time to come.

During a period of twenty-seven years' service it has seldom been my lot to enjoy, at one place, an undisturbed residence of more than a few months;

some service or other has always kept me, I may say, nearly in perpetual motion. The permanent charge of a division, however, seemed to present a fair chance of becoming stationary at last. I had scarcely assumed charge of the division, when the vision vanished; orders suddenly came enjoining me to be prepared to conduct a military expedition into the Angahmee Nagah country, bordering on the territory of Muneepoor and Burmah. The object of the expedition was to meet the Angahmee Nagah chiefs, and, by a conciliatory intercourse, to prepare them to co-operate with me in repressing their annual murderous and marauding incursions against our more peaceable subjects; to survey and map the tract of country in question, and to open a regular communication with Muneepoor and Now-Gong, through the Angahmee country *viâ* Dheemahpoor, Sumokhoo-Ting, Poplongmaee, and Yang, which would facilitate trade, improve the condition of the hill tribes, and eventually lead to the abandonment of savage habits, and the peaceable and prosperous settlement of this barbarous tribe.

Although naturally fond of excitement and adventures, I cannot say I felt much joy in being nominated to conduct such a mission, for I was aware there would be great fatigue in marching on

foot through a mountainous, wooded country, and that I should suffer considerable exposure both by night and day, through the extremes of temperature from heat to cold, coupled with some personal danger, and, worse than all, with the best intentions and the utmost zeal, I might still fail to carry out the views of Government. However, as the life of a soldier consists in prompt obedience, I set to work cheerfully to make such arrangements as the nature of my journey required. I immediately made up a small tent seven feet by nine; laid in a supply of provisions, consisting of rice, dal, salt, &c., and other necessaries for the detachment and coolies, and sent off the whole stock from Golaghaut up the river Dhunseeree to Dheemahpoor, from which post I determined on entering the hills.

A company of a hundred men of the 2nd Assam Light Infantry formed my escort under the command of a lieutenant; an apothecary to attend the sick, as well as an uncovenanted sub-assistant surveyor, completed our party. On the 20th November, 1845, we marched from Now-Gong, and the daily incidents that befel us till we returned home will now be extracted from the daily journal of the tour.

CHAPTER II.

Starting of the expedition—An extraordinary shot—Difficulty of progression—A visit to Tooleeram Senaputtee—Description of his territory—His life and adventures—Internal feuds—The Jummoonah rapids—The ruined city of Dheemahpoor.

20*th*, 21*st*.—The two first marches to Koteeatollee and Dubboka, about twenty-four miles, were through a level country, studded with flourishing and populous villages and gardens, and intersected by streams and large lakes. We passed through immense sheets of fine rice cultivation, and here and there small patches of sugar-cane.

22*nd*.—At half past seven A.M., we left Dubboka and crossed the Jummoonah river in small boats to the south bank in Tooleeram Senaputtee's territory, and at once entered tree jungle, which we traversed for some miles. We then passed the two small, wretched looking villages of Katkutea and Deohore, situated in extensive plains of high reed jungle, but only a few acres of land were brought under cultivation. Although the distance to Howrah-ghat, our

encampment, was only ten miles, we were five hours on the road, as, in many places, we were obliged to cut open a footpath through the dense high reed jungle to enable us to get along at all. On reaching Howrah-ghat we waded through the Jummoonah river knee deep, and were snugly housed in a few grass huts hastily erected for our accommodation in the vicinity of the village on the north bank of the Jummoonah.

In the afternoon, Lieutenant Campbell, seeing innumerable tracks of wild animals, deer, elephants, buffaloes, and rhinoceroses, mounted his elephant for a little sport; he had scarcely left the camp, when he suddenly came upon two rhinoceroses, in the midst of miry reed jungle twenty feet high. With great dexterity he instantly fired two shots at the animal nearest him, and, by a happy accident, the ball not only passed through the head of the animal aimed at, but lodged in the head of another rhinoceros standing close by it; when, to his surprise, both animals fell dead on the spot. One rhinoceros having fallen on the legs of the other, Lieutenant Campbell was firmly convinced that his first shot missed and the second ball proved fatal to both animals; it seems almost incredible, but there is no reason to doubt the fact.

23rd.—We were five hours to-day in reaching Kachooamaree, a distance of about ten miles; our path was rough, winding, and difficult, through thick tree forest and high grass or reeds unvaried by the signs of cultivation or villages; and the ground in many places being still very miry, the effluvium from the rotten vegetation was most offensive. As Tooleeram Senaputtee's residence was only a mile and a half from our encampment on the banks of the Jummoonah, we proceeded to pay him a visit. After wading through a very high reed jungle, we at last came to his dwelling, a wretched grass hut situated on the edge of a tank choked with rank weeds, in the middle of an extensive and poorly cultivated grass plain. A few straggling huts, inhabited by Cacharees and dependants of Senaputtee, formed all that could be called a village; a few pigs, fowls, and ducks, were wandering about, but there were no signs of comfort around any of the huts; no gardens or enclosures; all appeared poverty-stricken, as well as sickly, in this wilderness of jungle

Tooleeram Senaputtee, an infirm old man, was clothed in the meanest cotton garb, and looked more like a skeleton than a living being. He received me with civility, and, as he has experienced

great vicissitudes in life, I cannot refrain from noticing them, to show how principalities are not unfrequently formed in India.

The extent of country intrusted to the rule of Tooleeram and his two sons, Nookoolram and Brijnath, is about 2,160 square miles, being nearly one-fourth of the district of Now-Gong, containing, as far as we can learn, forty-four small villages, of 1,043 grass huts; calculating five persons to each hut, the population may be assumed at 5,215 souls, — the net revenue from whom would be 994 rs. 12 as. Koheedan, the father of Tooleeram, was a khidmutgar, butler or table servant, of Krisen Chunder, Rajah of Cachar. Shortly after his death, in the reign of his brother Gobind Chunder, Rajah of Cachar, Koheedan was appointed to some situation of trust in the hills, where he rebelled, and endeavoured to form an independent kingdom; but the Rajah of Cachar, the late Gobind Chunder, caused him to be inveigled to Dhurrumpoor, and there assassinated. At that time Tooleeram was a chuprassee in Gobind Chunder's service, and, seeing his life was in danger, he instantly fled to the hills, where he defended himself most successfully against several attempts made to reduce him.

Tooleeram took part in the invasion of Cachar by the Burmese in 1824, and after the peace, when Gobind Chunder was restored to his throne and country, Tooleeram still retained possession of the mountains, in spite of every attempt made to expel him from his fastnesses. In 1828, Tooleeram, feeling himself infirm, intrusted the command of his followers to Gobind Ram, his cousin, by whom Gobind Chunder's troops were defeated in their last attempt on the hills, but Tooleeram was not allowed to reap the fruits of the victory. His cousin, Gobind Ram, although reared from infancy by Tooleeram, now ungratefully requited his kindness; he took possession of his principality, and compelled Tooleeram to take refuge in Jynteea.

In July, 1829, Gumbhir Sing gave Tooleeram a party of Muneepoorees, by whose assistance he was enabled to expel his ungrateful cousin, who then fled to Dhurrumpoor and entered into allegiance with Rajah Gobind Chunder. About this time, to terminate these intestine dissensions, the late Mr. D. Scott, agent to the Governor-General, obliged Gobind Chunder to make a cession to Tooleeram of a certain extent of country, which we agreed to keep him in possession of. After Gobind Chunder's murder in 1830, Tooleeram went to Cachar, when

his cousin Gobind Ram again took possession of his country. He was, however, quickly reinstated without resorting to arms, by the interference of the Superintendent of Cachar. In June, 1831, he was once more attacked by the followers of Gobind Ram and the Ranees, and narrowly escaped with his life. In Cachar, Tooleeram is held in very low estimation, partly because it is supposed he was implicated in the murder of Gobind Chunder, and partly on account of his low origin; for people are naturally not well pleased at seeing a chuprassee made a rajah. He has never received the title of rajah either from the people or our Government. Of late years he has pretended to be descended from an old line of princes anterior to the late chief of Cachar; but his pretensions rest solely on the assertion of himself and his friends, and such a claim was not heard of before the year 1830. His two sons, Nookoolram and Brijnath, are on the most bitter terms of enmity, as the younger, Brijnath, ran away with his elder brother Nookoolram's wife, and the woman has children by the younger, as well as by the elder, brother. Nookoolram was bent on destroying his brother; but the old man interfered, and this catastrophe is probably postponed till the demise of the father.

Tooleeram* receives a monthly pension of fifty rupees from the British Government, and pays 490 rupees tribute instead of the three maunds and twenty seers of ivory, or eight elephants' tusks, formerly given.

In 1833, Tooleeram, having executed two persons supposed to be British subjects, was tried at Gowohattee for murder, but at that time he was an independent chief, and had undoubtedly the power of life and death; and, as the persons appeared to have conspired against his life, and were not British subjects, he was acquitted, but his authority has since been restricted to the fiscal management of his territory and the settlement of petty disputes. All heinous offences are tried by the officer in charge of the zillah of Now-Gong. Tooleeram does not keep up any military or police force, and his power is very limited; his two sons now jointly manage the country, but the time may not be far distant, when the British Government may be under the necessity of taking it under its own protection, and pensioning off the two sons, a policy that is in every way to be desired if the welfare of the people is consulted. At present it is a serious obstacle to the settlement of the Nagah territory,

* Tooleeram Senaputtee died 12th October, 1850.

and the extension of our subjects towards the southern frontier.*

25*th*.—On leaving Kachooamaree, we had a dreary march of fifteen miles through a dense tree jungle and some plains of high grass, and were seven hours in reaching our encampment at the foot of the Jummoonah rapids or falls, called Seelbhetah. The Coolies came into camp about sunset with our baggage and provisions, when the camp became a scene of activity, every one exerting himself heartily to cook his dinner. The scenery here is very wild, and the fall of the river over a ledge of rocks between a narrow gorge of low hills cannot be less than sixty or seventy feet, with a noise that can be heard at a great distance, and, after its fall, as it dashes over innumerable boulders for a distance of a hundred and fifty yards, the gloomy scenery around is divested of its monotony, and the traveller feels a pleasurable excitement which he would not exchange for the comforts of the fire-side at home. At night in the dark forest, two or three hundred little fires of the troops and Coolies blazing forth on the banks of the foaming river presented a most animated scene. Up to this point, small canoes navigate the Jummoonah river, and on our

* See Appendix A.

day's march many little huts were met with on the banks of the river, occupied by traders waiting for the Meekirs and other hill tribes to bring down their cotton to sell or barter for salt. Above the waterfalls, the river appeared very deep, and the current slow; boats arriving at the foot of the rapids are occasionally unloaded and dragged through the jungle, and are again launched upon the river a short distance above the waterfalls.

26*th*.—On this day, we were four hours travelling through much the same sort of uninhabited, dense tree and grass jungle, till we reached the little village of Mohung Deehooa, on the north bank of the Jummoonah. As the river was only three feet deep, we waded through it twice, and most of us being wet, our pace was increased to enjoy the comfort of a change of dry clothes. In the afternoon, a few Rengmah Nagahs visited us, and presented a fowl and a little rice, for which civility we gave them a bottle of spirituous liquor, which they prized more than money or any other remuneration.

27*th*.—Having risen at our usual hour of four A.M., to allow time for the troops and Coolies to cook and eat their breakfast before starting, we set out at seven, and reached the Burjoree, a small stream, in six hours—distance 15 miles. The whole route

was through a dark, damp, chilly, gloomy forest with small undulating hills, and neither the sky nor sun was seen throughout the day. Our road was a mere footpath, and the forest so thick that we could not see ten paces before us. On reaching our camping ground, by the aid of the Coolies we cut down the jungle, and quickly erected, with the branches of trees and leaves, little sheds or huts for ourselves, Sipahees, Coolies, and servants, and having served out provisions to the whole, and secured the camp against any sudden surprise, we retired to rest, rather disgusted with our position, but glad it was no worse.

28*th*.—The distance travelled to-day to Dheemahpoor was fifteen miles, which occupied, as yesterday, six hours. We crossed numerous small low hills, but the ascents and descents were easy, and the footpath tolerably open. The forest was of precisely the same character as yesterday; not a vestige of any habitation or a human being was seen between Mohung Dehooa and Dheemahpoor, a distance of thirty miles. A more dreary and desolate wilderness I seldom traversed in any part of Assam. It seemed totally devoid of man, beasts, or birds; a death-like stillness everywhere prevailed, broken only by the occasional barking or halloo of the ooluck

or ape. As our view was confined to a few paces before us, while the earth was excessively damp—the sun not having pierced the forest, probably, for half a century—we felt a little depressed, and all hailed with joy the Dhunseeree river, at this season of the year about thirty yards wide, and navigable for small canoes till December, as far as Dheemahpoor. After erecting some small huts in the vicinity of the Now-Gong police-militia stockade, on the banks of the Dhunseeree, we soon made ourselves comfortable for the night.

During our stay at this spot we were all much interested and struck with the ruins of the old city of Dheemahpoor, on the banks of the Dhunseeree river. It is traditionally believed that this ancient city was founded in the reign of Chukurdoz, Rajah of Assam, who died according to the Assamese historians, at Gher-Gong, in the year 1663, after a reign of seven years. The entrance gateway of the old fort is still tolerably perfect; it is built of brick and mortar, but is now much injured by trees growing out of the walls. After passing through the gateway into the fort, we met with two rows of thirty curious round sandstone pillars, carved with representations of the lotus flower; then two rows of fifteen square pillars,

Ford & West Lith.rs

The Fort at Dhoomahnoor

Ford & West Lith.rs

roughly carved with figures of peacocks, tigers, deer, and elephants. Many of the pillars are broken and prostrate. The rows of pillars are fifty-five feet wide and two hundred and thirty-six feet long; ten feet between each pillar, and twelve feet between each row. Taking the average height of the square pillars at eighteen feet, twelve above and six under ground, and five feet square, the weight of each of these stones, when quarried, was not less than seven hundred and twenty-nine maunds, or about twenty tons. The largest round pillar is thirteen feet high and six feet six inches in diameter; one of the smallest is ten feet high, and three feet nine inches in diameter. Whether the pillars ever supported a roof I could not discover from any signs or vestige of its having been enclosed.

The pillars are brown, or rather black, from exposure to the elements, and they are so soft that they can easily be cut with a knife, and break off in pieces with the slightest blow; which would lead to the inference that they were made on the spot from some composition of sand and other ingredients, as it does not seem practicable to convey such enormous masses of stone from the Nagah hills, which are distant from this spot thirteen

miles. Each pillar is supposed to have been the appointed seat of a grandee according to his rank. It is said that every year, on a fixed day, all the nobles assembled in this hall of audience, and a human being was decapitated between two square pillars in the centre of the hall before the assembly, as a sacrifice to appease the wrath of the Deity. On the west side of the Dhunseeree, near the fort, there is a large tank completely choked with grass jungle, and surrounded by five nohor trees. On the eastern bank of the Dhunseeree there are four large tanks also surrounded by an almost impenetrable jungle, rendering it very difficult to approach them.

CHAPTER III.

Establishment of a station on the Deeboo river—A day in the water—Visit to the Chief of Rojapo-mah—Martial exercises of the Nagahs—The cook is taken ill—A bivouac in the jungle—Arrival at Mozomah—Hospitality of the Nagahs—A diplomatic conference—Visit to the village—Description of the houses and their internal economy.

From the 28th November to the 5th December, we were busily occupied in cutting open a foot-path through a dense forest to the Deeboo river, and clearing a piece of ground to encamp on at the foot of the Sumokhoo-Ting range of hills. Three hundred Coolies daily carried up supplies of rice, dall, salt, oil, &c., to our depôt, near Rojapo-mah, on the banks of the Deeboo river, as we intended to make this point the base of our operations. This being effected, we marched to the entrance of the gorge or pass east of Sumokhoo-Ting on the 5th, and encamped in an open plain of high jungle in little grass huts at two P. M., after crossing over to the right bank of the Deeboo river.

6th.—Setting out from our encampment at eight A. M., we wended our way along the eastern bank of the Deeboo river, over some high precipices and many steep acclivities, for two miles; but at last there was no possibility of climbing over the perpendicular ledges of rock in our front; we were obliged, therefore, to take to the river, and a ludicrous scene occurred. It was a bitterly cold day, and a slight drizzling rain was falling; to add to our discomfort, the water was two and three feet deep, extremely cold, and running with extreme rapidity over a stony bed. The Sipahees, and all of us indeed, immediately relieved ourselves of our trowsers, which each threw over his shoulders, one leg dangling on each side as far as the breast, and with short cotton drawers and naked feet we all cheerfully entered the water, and crawled along slowly for a mile and a half. On each side the banks were very precipitous, and many bluff high projections were surmounted with the utmost difficulty. The rolling stones in the bed of the river were as slippery as glass, and some of the boulders were particularly sharp, cutting our feet like a knife. Scarcely one of us got along without an unhappy fall; but no matter who fell, whether officers, Sipahees, or Coolies,

hearty shouts and laughter repeatedly proclaimed that another luckless wight had fallen, and had been saved the trouble of a bath. No one heeded the sufferings that we were obliged to endure, for all were anxious to quit the bed of the river as quickly as possible. We had now been a long time in the water, and our progress seemed exceedingly slow, and we were becoming excessively cold, and shook to such a degree that we could hardly stand; but we persevered, and at last quitted the river, put on our clothes hastily, and trudged over a succession of low hills for three miles and five furlongs, which brought us to our encampment on the west bank of the Deeboo river, near Rojapo-mah. Our feet were terribly lacerated and bruised by walking barefooted over the rolling stones; and few of us, in a long life probably, will easily forget the pain and suffering of this day's march.

In the evening, the chief of Rojapo-mah came into camp and presented a few cotton cloths as a present. In return I gave him a bottle of brandy and saw him clear out of camp, with which condescension he was quite delighted; but, being still apparently suspicious of his safety, I perceived that he kept turning round every minute to see if

any one was pursuing him. A few hours enabled us to erect small huts for the Coolies, Sipahees, and ourselves, and, as the rain had set in heavily, we passed that evening over a good log-wood fire, though almost suffocated by the smoke.

7*th.*—We were in a wretched predicament to-day, as we could not leave our leaky frail huts. We appeared enveloped in darkness, even at noonday, and a drizzling rain never ceased. We made huge fires with wet wood, and were nearly blinded and almost suffocated by the smoke; but the cold driving wind, and excessive dampness of the atmosphere and ground, were very trying; more particularly as many of us were laid up with severe colds from walking in the river Deeboo for so many hours on the previous day; nevertheless, the whole party was in good spirits, and no grumbling voices were heard.

8*th.*—In the course of the day the sun came out, and several of our party proceeded to pay the chief of the village of Rojapo-mah a visit, who resided only about a mile and a half distant from camp. They were all treated with great civility, and the chief invited them into his house, and offered them, out of a trough placed in the middle of the house, a ladle of fermented liquor as thick as mud, the

smell of which was quite sufficient to debar them from partaking of the proffered cheer. I was much amused by the action and gesture made by the chief on his being asked by me to allow his children to go to Now-Gong to be taught in our schools. He declined the offer, and said that he would rather part with his life than his sons, though I promised good treatment and plenty of handsome cornelian beads, the first consideration with a Nagah. The chief got up several times to reply to questions put to him through our interpreters, and evinced much fear of our having a design of kidnapping his sons; but, after quitting my presence, they presently returned to camp to gratify their curiosity and barter something with the camp followers, and their suspicions seemed considerably abated.

In the vicinity of Rojapo-mah great numbers of tea trees were observed growing luxuriantly in the jungle, some twelve or fourteen feet high; but we did not discover that the Nagahs ever drink tea. We were unsuccessful in collecting tea seeds; for, although the Nagahs have no use for them, and are ignorant of their value, this was not the case with the pigs, for the shells were seen in abundance under the trees. The afternoon was passed in

receiving visits from the chiefs, and accepting their presents of elephants' tusks, spears, and cotton cloths, as tribute, or mark of allegiance to the British Government. We were much amused by the Nagahs performing their martial exercises for our diversion, and throwing the spear as if in action with an enemy. They are particularly dexterous in holding the spear in the hand, spinning it round with great rapidity, and then suddenly throwing it with considerable precision at an object fifteen or twenty paces distant, hallooing, yelling, and jumping about with the greatest agility, as if in the presence of a foe.

9th.—Leaving a guard with our provisions in camp, near Rojapo-mah, we rose early to adjust the loads of the two hundred Coolies who carried our baggage and provisions, and, by nine A.M., each porter having received his load of about twenty seers, or forty pounds, and arranging them in a long row in rear of the main body of our force, we pursued our course up the stony bed of the Deeboo river, for six miles in and out of the water, ankle and knee deep, over slippery rolling stones and immense boulders, for upwards of five hours. The latter part of the route was over some gentle ascents and descents, through thick tree jungle,

till we reached the long high hill on which Cheereh-mah was formerly situated. We then descended into an open rice valley which had just been reaped. Here, by the side of the roaring rivulet, the Deeboo (for it had now become a small stream), we encamped for the night, having only progressed nine miles in about seven hours. Throughout this day's march we were compelled to keep to the bed of the river, for the country was so impenetrable from high grass and tree jungle; but, if we had delayed a few days till a path had been cut, we should have been saved much suffering in walking in the water for so many hours with bare feet.

10*th.*—Just as we were preparing to set out this morning, my cook was found to be unable to accompany us to the next encampment; he was a great opium eater, and, his stock of opium having failed, sickness prostrated his strength. We gave him some medicine, and left a Coolie to bring him along after us slowly; but, as soon as we had started, he refused to be carried, and was accordingly left by the Coolie in the encampment. We marched at half past eight A.M., and our route to Tokojinah-mah was first over low hills, and then through several narrow valleys beautifully culti-

vated with salee, or winter rice, which was just ready to be gathered in. The ascent to Tokojinahmah was tortuous and precipitous, over huge ledges of rocks and innumerable stone steps. We wended our way up to the summit of the hill with great fatigue, and entered a wooden gateway on the edge of a precipice by climbing up several steps. As soon as we passed through the gate we found, on our right hand, a small piece of table land about 100 yards square, and on this spot were situated twelve Nagah huts. On turning to the left we commenced another ascent of 200 yards, to gain the summit of the range, on which were twenty houses. The chiefs of both villages attended on us, and presented cotton cloths, spears, fowls, and eggs, as tribute or token of submission, and in return for their civility a little salt was distributed. After a few minutes' halt we proceeded on our way for some distance over most difficult ground, abrupt ascents and descents, through grass and tree jungle; and meeting with no streams for some time, we were all greatly distressed with thirst. By persevering, however, we at last reached the Rengmah river, called by the Nagahs, Deeyong, and the joy we all felt at getting a drop of water to assuage our burning thirst, can

only be appreciated by those who have been similarly situated.

It was now past three o'clock P.M; and, although we had been seven hours on the trudge, still we had only come seven miles by the perambulator. The Coolies, or porters, with our baggage and provisions, were a long distance in the rear, and we were all completely knocked up. To proceed further in the attempt to reach Mozo-mah that night was quite out of the question; we, accordingly, bivouacked for the night in the midst of bamboo jungle, about two hundred feet above the river Rengmah on the side of a hill. We cut down the bamboos, erected small huts, and made ourselves as snug as the rough sloping ground would admit; but our camp was confined, damp, and gloomy in the extreme; hoar frost covered the ground, the wind was high and very cold, and, what with hourly patrols to be ready for any attack of the Nagahs, we passed a sleepless night.

11*th*.—At nine A.M., the thermometer stood as low as forty degrees, when we commenced our march towards Mozo-mah. After two hours' sharp ascent over precipices two thousand feet high, by a path eighteen inches wide, we traversed a frightful gorge, and began to descend to the low hills, on

which Mozo-mah and Kono-mah are situated, and encamped on the sloping side of the high range, opposite Mozo-mah, in the midst of terraced fields. We were truly glad that we had met with no opposition whilst in the pass, or many lives must have been lost; for the Nagahs could have attacked us by rolling down stones upon us, whilst making our way through the pass, with perfect impunity; and, on this account, in future, if open hostilities are ever resorted to, this route should be avoided.

The views yesterday and to-day, as we crossed over the high range to Mozo-mah, about 5,250 feet above the level of the sea, were very beautiful. We were delighted to see numerous villages east of Mozo-mah, and a good deal of rice cultivation. On our first arrival in camp, it was pleasing to notice with what cheerful agility the Nagahs ran off with their peculiar yelling noise, skipping over the walls three and four feet high, to the wooded hills, to bring us in a supply of firewood, as well as bamboos, and we were not long in constructing little sheds or huts with the rice stubble of the fields. Daily did the Nagahs resort to our camp in great numbers, without the slightest fear, and bartered their pigs, fowls, cotton cloths, and cloths made of the bark of the nettle plant, for salt, cornelian beads,

&c. Every endeavour was made to induce the chiefs of the village of Kono-mah to deliver up the persons who were concerned in the surprise and destruction of the outpost at Lunkae, in October, 1844, and for which a portion of the village of Kono-mah had been burnt by Mr. Sub-Assistant Wood, in January, 1845, but all in vain. The chiefs came into camp frequently, and represented the state of affairs; half of the inhabitants of the village, they stated, had fled to the jungles with their property, expecting that the *lex talionis* would be momentarily enforced against them by our troops as before. They were perfectly at our mercy; we might reduce the village again to ashes, destroy their grain, and bring them to the utmost verge of distress,—still they, as chiefs, could not deliver up the delinquents. The community did not allow them to exercise such a power; nor were they acquainted with the names of the criminals, for a small body had gone on the foray from their village, and committed the massacre, and, consequently, it would rest with us to punish the whole community for the misbehaviour of the few; they (the chiefs) had restored the four muskets carried off on this occasion, and while they pretended to deplore the customs of their country, in sanctioning

and approving these inroads, they implored the clemency of the Government, and begged that their tribute and submission might be accepted.

The arguments used by the chiefs being correct in regard to their inability to apprehend and deliver up the culprits, and the village being deserted, and three villages having being burnt in the previous expedition, without any good resulting from it, it appeared perfectly impossible to hunt down the Nagahs in these mountain fastnesses; and it seemed highly unadvisable to retaliate on them for past outrages, by seizing their grain, destroying their houses, carrying off their cattle, and having recourse to other severities necessarily attendant on open hostilities, in the present crisis when the names even of the culprits were not known. In fact, such proceedings would only tend to exasperate and close the door to reconciliation, as well as defer to an indefinite period the cessation of these barbarous practices; as conciliatory measures were also the positive and primary object of the mission, we did not feel justified in rejecting the submissive demeanour and proffered tribute of this treacherous, savage clan, for the prospect of waging an unsatisfactory and hopeless war, without any hope of ameliorating their future condition.

The chiefs were accordingly again taken into favour, and the assurance that their past misdeeds were overlooked, was received with manifest feelings of joy and confidence.

All the chiefs were summoned to witness the taking of the oaths administered to them according to their own most solemn ceremonies. Written agreements were drawn out by us (for the Nagahs have no written language), and thoroughly explained to them, and, to show their assent to the proceedings, they placed a double-barrelled gun between their teeth, after this a sword and a spear, and declared that, if they swerved from their oaths, they would fall by the one or the other. In their agreements, they promised not to molest their neighbours in future; to abstain from plundering excursions, and cutting off the heads of any Nagahs or other clans; to refer all disputes to British authorities; not to commence hostilities with any clan without their sanction; and annually to pay tribute as a token of allegiance to the British Government, who, in return, would redress their grievances, protect them from aggressions, and secure their general welfare by such measures as would conduce to their happiness.

12*th*.—I visited the village of Mozo-mah this

morning in company with Mr. Thornton, who continued his survey from the camp and throughout the village. On the summit of a hill joining the main high range leading to Poplongmaee and Yang, we counted 165 houses, and, as the hill is cultivated from the base to its summit in plots or walled terraces, it would be a most formidable place to assail, as each house is surrounded with a stone wall, and a street with stone walls on each side, four and five feet high, extends from one end of the hill to where it joins the principal range. From the top of the Mozo-mah hill, we had a fine view of many villages in the distance, to the north-east, and innumerable cultivated patches on the hills. Their cultivation is managed with the hoe, and every terrace is irrigated by water being carried along narrow trenches a great distance in every direction, so that these narrow-walled terraces, at first sight, look like steps ascending to the villages, till a nearer approach shows the cause of the labour bestowed in their construction.

On our way up we saw twenty black and brown cows grazing in the stubble ; they were of a larger breed than those found in the plains of Assam, and were in excellent condition. The Nagahs do not consume milk, and cattle are not used for tilling

the ground, but are kept chiefly for sacrifices and feasts. They have many pigs and fowls, and eat every kind of flesh. That of the elephant is highly esteemed, and a dead elephant is a glorious prize for a whole village. It is also said that they are not averse to tigers' flesh. We were treated with great civility, and invited into their houses, which are gable-ended, and about thirty or forty feet long by twelve or sixteen feet wide. Each house was divided off into one or two rooms; the pigs, fowls, wife, and children, were all huddled together, with the grain in large bamboo baskets five feet high and four in diameter, in the same room. In one corner was a trough filled with some kind of fermented liquor made of rice, which was thick and white, and most offensive to our olfactory nerves. In this trough they dip their wooden cups or gourd bottles, and all the morning the Nagahs lounge about in the sun in their little court-yards, and, seated upon a high stone commanding some extensive view, sip this abominable beverage. The gable ends of the houses are generally built up with planks of wood fastened with cane and bamboos, one above the other. The houses are built with no pretence to regularity; they are unconnected, have distinct court-yards surrounded with

stone walls, and a little bamboo railing. The eaves of the houses are within two feet of the ground, to prevent their being blown away by storms, and the walls are made of split bamboo interwoven together. The inside of the houses is exceedingly filthy, and some of the old men and women were so dirty in their persons, that I should say they had not washed themselves for years, and this, perhaps, is not much to be wondered at, for this morning the thermometer at seven A. M. stood at thirty-six degrees, and the night was exceedingly cold. Water left in a pan froze one-eighth of an inch in thickness, which quite astonished our camp followers; and one gentleman, who had been born in India, exclaimed, that for the first time in his life he had seen ice and hoar frost on the ground, but he never wished to see it again. The climate, indeed, at this time, was very fine; a strong, bracing dry wind and hoar frosts every night seemed more like England than actual residence in the East.

The Nagahs of Mozo-mah manufacture a strong thick cloth well adapted for their changeable and cold climate; it is made of the bark of the stalks of the nettle plant, and is of a brown colour with black and red stripes, or quite plain, and is generally

used by the Nagahs as a chudder, or covering thrown over the body. The climate here is not favourable to the growth of cotton, but they procure abundance from Sumokhoo-Ting.

CHAPTER IV.

The policy of making roads through the Angahmee Nagah country discussed—Different routes now practicable—Return journey—Death of the cook.

13*th*.—Last night was, as usual, excessively cold, and few of us enjoyed any sleep. Early in the morning the ground was covered with hoar frost, and at eight A. M. the thermometer stood at thirty-nine degrees. I was much amused to-day at the modest request of the Mozo-mah chief, to grant him a guard of twenty sipahees to be stationed in his village, when he said he should be able to fight all his enemies, and he would first commence by taking his revenge on Kono-mah. I reminded him that he had only just sworn not to go to war with any tribe in future, but particularly with the Nagahs of Kono-mah; all the Nagahs were British subjects, and if he waged war with any of them I should punish him for so doing. If a guard were located in his village, it

would be to put a stop to feuds and predatory inroads for skulls and property, and not for his aggrandizement, or to bring all the small villages under his sway. The crime of murder would in future only be settled by the offender being hung; such was British law. This the chief could not at all comprehend, and he did not want any guard if he was not allowed to make war on his enemies.

As some have advocated the expediency of opening a communication to promote trade with the north-eastern parts of Assam from this point, particularly with the people called Shans on the other side of the Palkoe Mountains, from Northern Ava to the Khyendwen river above Muneepoor, the question merits attention. On a review of the subject it will be seen what benefits would be likely to accrue to the Province of Assam, if such a scheme was carried out. It is generally believed there are three routes from Assam to Northern Ava and the Khyendwen river. The first is by Hookong, a territory occupied by Singphoos, a lawless disunited people; and before that point is reached, a most desolate country of nearly two hundred miles has to be traversed, two causes sufficient to deter traders from following such a course, and it is, therefore, completely closed.

The second route is from Seebsaghur to Chengbang in the Nagah hills, a journey of four days; and, from Chengbang to Langa, it is estimated that the distance may be two days' journey, and thence to the valley of the Khyendwen it is said to be two more; requiring altogether eight days, two in the plains and six in the hills. The opening of this route is not deemed impracticable, though difficult, particularly as the Nagahs have not yet been brought thoroughly under British rule, though they nominally acknowledge fealty to the British Government. Until this be completely effected, and we can ensure the safety of life and property to the traveller, no trade could be carried on with Assam by this route. At present we have little or no control over the Nagahs, nor is there any likelihood of the Nagahs becoming civilised within the next century, and desirous of a free intercourse being kept up with strangers. This route, therefore, even if opened, must, in consequence, be deemed closed to traders.

The third route to the Khyendwen river is from the south-eastern quarter of the Now Gong District through the Angahmee Nagah hills, *viâ* Sumokhoo-Ting, Tokojinah-mah, and Mozo-mah. This last village is 133 miles from Now-Gong, or twelve days'

journey; beyond Mozo-mah to the south-east the country has not yet been explored by any European; a thannah and police militia have been located at Sumokhoo-Ting since 1846, and the Anghamee Naghas have received our advances very favourably, and entreated that other posts might be established amongst them. When this is accomplished, and this tribe submits to taxation, which is anticipated to occur at no very distant day, there will, probably, not be any insuperable difficulty in crossing the southern mountains to the Khyendwen river, estimated at about eight days' journey from Mozo-mah.

The supposition of the Angahmee Naghas becoming friendly, and fully able to supply all provisions required, renders such an undertaking apparently very feasible. But, admitting that this last route is opened, and safe for traders at the point crossed in the third route to the Khyendwen river, the Shan population is very scanty, and, therefore, there could be little or no trade that would confer much benefit on the Assamese; and the route, once opened, would expose central Assam to all the cruel ravages of the Burmese, an old and inveterate foe, who would take every opportunity of any misunderstandings between the two Govern-

ments to send hostile parties to enter into the very heart of the unprotected southern frontier of Assam and centre of the valley, lay waste the country, and carry off the effeminate people as slaves. If this route was once made easy, it is greatly to be feared that the valley of Assam would seldom be left undisturbed, and our military force would be required to be located on the southern mountains, to guard the passes into the Now-Gong District. In every view, therefore, it would seem uncalled for and unnecessary for the promotion of commerce, as it would be visionary and unwise to open roads to admit enemies into the province.

The fourth route into the Burmese territory is *viâ* Sumokhoo-Ting, Tireeah-mah, Poplongmaee, and Yang, to Muneepoor, which was travelled over in January, 1832, by Captains Jenkins and Pemberton; and, as there is a police post established at Dheemahpoor, it only remains for the Muneepoor Government to establish another post at Yang, when the communication with Now-Gong would be immediately opened, and rendered safe for travellers and trade. At no distant day we may expect to see this route used, and by this course a little trade might be carried on with Assam.

The fifth route from Now-Gong to Muneepoor is through Northern Cachar to Silchar, on the river Sormah; it is open and perfectly safe for travellers and traders throughout the year, and it is by this line that we hold any intercourse with Muneepoor by land from Now-Gong.

14*th*.—The thermometer at Mozo-mah, at seven A.M., stood at thirty-six degrees, and sheets of hoar frost covered the summits of the hills; we all felt the cold very much, and, setting out at eight A.M., we trudged along rapidly to keep ourselves warm, and, by three P.M., we reached Cheereh-mah, making two of our advance marches in one, distance ten miles; but it must be borne in mind that, after the first long ascent from Mozo-mah, we descended from the hills, which were upwards of 5,000 feet high. Another circumstance that also rendered our return march more rapid and easy, was owing to the precaution we had taken, whilst at Mozo-mah, of having some of the narrow paths over frightfully high precipices, widened and fenced in, so that we traversed the passes in half the time occupied in our advance. The Coolies, or porters, and the troops, rejoiced greatly at our return to our old encampment at Cheereh-mah, for the former, being thinly clad, suffered exceedingly

from the cold experienced at Mozo-mah. In fact the whole camp was in a state of one continued cough all night. Roaring fires were made, and each porter was supplied with a Nagah cloth as a covering; but still their sufferings, while exposed in an open bivouac, were great, and many were heard to say that they should remember the Nagah trip for the remainder of their lives. It was laughable to hear the natives describe their sufferings at Mozo-mah to the people who brought us our letters from Now-Gong. The weather, they said, was so intensely cold that even fire would not consume the wood, and when they put their hands into the flame, though they were slightly singed, they felt no heat.

Close to our camp, we discovered a piece of cotton cloth, which the servants recognized as belonging to the unfortunate cook who refused to be carried by a Coolie, and was left behind at Cheereh-mah, on the 10th; he had been seen on the previous day by a party of police, close to our camp, who gave him some rice, and, though he was afflicted with a bowel complaint, we were sadly disappointed on our arrival in not finding him, and concluded that he had been devoured by tigers. Two days afterwards, however, the chief of Mozo-

mah brought in his blanket to us at Rojapo-mah, and assured us that he had found the corpse close to our camp, by the side of the river Deeboo, and as there were no wounds or appearance of violence on the body, there can be little doubt but that the poor wretch died from diarrhœa, a lamentable victim to the effects, or rather the want, of opium. We all much regretted that we had not sent back a party of Sipahees with some porters to bring in the poor man, but on the 10th, at the end of a fatiguing march, no one could have returned that day, and till night-fall we expected him to join us. Besides, as the chief of Tokojina-mah, on the morning of the 10th, had promised us that he would take care of him till we returned, we were under little apprehension for his safety. From all we could learn, however, on our return, the cook, it appeared, refused to go to the Nagah village; he probably felt safer in our old camp than in their company, and, in consequence, sank under his disease, on the night before we returned.

15*th*.—About eight A. M., the loads of the porters who carried our baggage and provisions being arranged, we commenced our march in the usual order. The morning was mild in comparison with what we had experienced at Mozo-

mah; still the ground was covered with hoar-frost in many places, and when we took to the bed of the river Deeboo, we felt it excessively cold, and were upwards of four hours in reaching Rojapomah. Few of us, however, thought much of this day's exposure in wading through so much water for so many hours with naked feet, as we had become inured to this sort of travelling; moreover, we were returning to our camp, and promised ourselves a few days of rest after our late fatigues.

CHAPTER V.

Preparations for the expedition to Northern Cachar—Severe cold—The village of Beereh-mah—Mode of life among the Nagahs—The advantages of teetotalism in the jungle—The village of Semkur—Flight of the inhabitants—Hosang-Hajoo—A visit to the chief—Return to Now-Gong—Results of the expedition.

THE 16th and 17th were passed in making preparations for our trip to Hosang-Hajoo, in Northern Cachar; we reduced our force to fifty bayonets; packed up our provisions—sixty maunds, or 4,800 lbs. of rice, dal, oil, treacle, and tobacco—in small cane baskets, lined with leaves, each containing twenty seers weight, or a Coolie's load, and were prepared to commence our march on the 18th. Unfortunately, it was a very wet day, and, as the whole camp was comfortably housed in little grass huts, we thought it most prudent to halt another day.

On the 19th, at nine A.M., we set out and passed through the village of Rojapo-mah. The chief, who was very civil, took us to his house, and begged

us to taste his liquor from a wooden trough; but we declined drinking at so early an hour, and were glad of any excuse to avoid partaking of such a beverage. After leaving the village, the road was excellent for a couple of miles; we then entered a heavy, dense, bamboo jungle, which we passed through with the greatest difficulty, and were much annoyed by leeches; after this, we climbed several low hills, and passed through dense, wet, long grass and tree jungle alternately. We then ascended a high hill, and wound round along the ridge for some distance till we descended to the Konboo river, at the base of the village of Chah-mah. Our camp was very confined and damp, and though the march was only nine miles and a half, the porters with our provisions and baggage did not come into camp till six P.M., greatly exhausted. As we had been enveloped in a dense wet mist or fog all day, and our clothes were completely saturated, we hailed with no little joy the arrival of the porters with dry clothes and provisions, though at a late hour.

20*th*.—At eight A.M., hoar frost covered the ground, and the thermometer was at thirty-six degrees, but we started at nine. Immediately on leaving camp, we ascended a long, high hill, and

wound over a precipitous ridge for some distance with many ascents and descents, through heavy grass and tree jungle. We then passed through the village of Lehah-mah, consisting of thirty-nine houses. The chief came out to meet us, and presented to us fowls, eggs, cloths, &c., as tribute, and, on receiving a few conch shells, beads, knives, scissors, and handkerchiefs, as a return present, he was quite delighted, and went back to the village and brought us a basket of apples, the finest I ever saw in India. They looked like orange pippins, but were as sour as verjuice. We saw some fine peach trees close to the village, and met with many oak and fir trees; coffee in full berry was also abundant.

On leaving Lehah-mah the road was execrable—a mere blind footpath; and the jungle so thick that our progress was much impeded. After climbing and winding round the sides of several hills, we quitted the grass jungle and came out on hills totally clear of trees, and entered the village of Lakeh-mah, consisting of thirty-seven houses. On exchanging the usual presents the chief was well pleased, and we passed on to a deep valley, from which, by a zigzag footpath, we were led over one of the most precipitous hills I have ever crossed.

We were obliged to crawl up it on our hands and knees with naked feet; walking was quite out of the question, for the paths were as slippery as glass, and a single false step would have ended in destruction by a roll down a precipice of many hundred feet. With great labour, however, we all managed to crawl over it in perfect safety, and reaching the banks of a small stream, not far from Beereh-mah, by five P. M., in the midst of high grass jungle, we set to work quickly and soon erected grass huts, and the porters coming into camp by eight P. M., completely knocked up, we were not long in getting our dinner, and making ourselves comfortable for the night.

Some idea may be formed of the impassable nature of the country we travelled over this day, when I state that we only came eight miles one furlong, by the perambulator, in eight hours. It is perfectly wonderful to observe the hardy little hill Kookie and Meekir porters, with their loads, wend their way over these steep hills and precipices; each porter carries a spear, the handle of which being pointed with iron, he places on the ground, and advances steadily and safely over the most fearful places, with greater facility than people of the plains can without any load or in-

cumbrance. Indeed, Assamese porters would be perfectly useless in this hilly country. The Nagah guides and our interpreters seemed determined to take us by the most impassable routes; almost every high hill might have been avoided, if we had known the country, and had cut a path previously to our advance; but to this the Nagahs seem averse, and their endeavour always is to go over the summits of the highest hills in a straight line, forgetting, or being ignorant, that the longest way round is generally the shortest way home. On this day we saw the snowy mountains of Bootan, close to Tezpore, at the incredible distance, I imagine, of not less than 100 or 150 miles in a straight line; we were all struck with their magnificent grandeur.

21*st.*—We marched at nine A. M., and after a long, tedious, fatiguing ascent, through fields of rice and cotton, we gained the summit of the high hill on which the village of Beereh-mah, consisting of 117 houses, is situated. The entrance to the village was over a single plank laid across a wide ditch, and the hill was steep and *pangied**

* *Pangies* are a species of sharpened bamboo struck in the ground, and forming an effective defence against any sudden incursion of the enemy.

in every direction, and rendered inaccessible to any sudden attack. Having been greatly fatigued by the previous day's march, although we had only some three miles to go, we deemed it prudent not to proceed further, and encamped at the foot of the hill. The Nagahs here, as in most other places we passed through, seem to lead most idle lives, lounging about their court-yards, basking in the sun throughout the morning, and drinking the usual beverage, a fermented liquor made of rice.

The inhabitants of Beereh-mah are in person the most filthy set of Nagahs we ever met with. Their bodies are literally covered with dirt, and in dealing or bartering they practise many mean and petty tricks, in order to drive as hard a bargain as possible. They are totally devoid of a spark of generosity, and will not give the most trifling articles without receiving remuneration. They are great traders in brass ornaments, conch shells, and beads; and it is said that, till very lately, it was the great mart on these hills for the sale of slaves. The atmosphere here was particularly clear, dry, and bracing, the thermometer standing at 36 deg. at eight A. M. The low hills close to Beereh-mah appear to have all

been under cultivation, as they are covered with grass three or four feet high, and are very free from tree jungle.

22*nd*.—We left Beereh-mah at eight A. M., and encamped at two P. M. in the midst of a heavy tree jungle by the side of a small stream, barely sufficient to supply our wants; but as there was no water, we were informed, for many miles beyond this, we were constrained to encamp, although we had only come seven miles in six hours.

The first ascent from camp was long, steep, and fatiguing; a blind path led us over undulating hills, covered with tree jungle, and confining our view to a few paces before us, which rendered the march dull, gloomy, and monotonous. We met with the coffee plant growing under the shade of large trees most luxuriantly, and we picked up gallons of apples, but they were miserably small and excessively sour.

23*rd*.—Our route to-day was very tortuous over low undulating hills, or skirting round the base of high hills for three or four miles. We then traversed a comparatively level country, and crossed the Longting and Langjillee streams, at this time five or six yards wide; but in the rains they cannot be less than twenty or thirty yards broad. Be-

sides these streams we crossed two small rivulets, and after ascending the high hill of Bosompoe-mah, a village of twenty houses, we encamped close to it, having, by the perambulator, come thirteen miles three furlongs in about seven hours. Between Beereh-mah and Bosompoe-mah, a distance of twenty miles, an uninterrupted heavy tree jungle prevails, devoid of a single human habitation; at least, if any exist, they were hidden from our view. A more dreary, gloomy, desolate wilderness can scarcely be imagined. We served out two days' provisions to each individual in camp to-day, and directed the spare porters to hasten on in advance to their homes in Northern Cachar by forced marches, as we could not tell how many days we should be in reaching Cachar, or whether we should have any surplus provisions, if not supplied in that district.

24*th*.—The ascents and descents to-day were frequent and sharp. The path was very tolerable, though it was exceedingly winding, and passed through a desolate wilderness of bamboos, tree and grass jungle. We were six hours travelling eleven miles and a quarter, and encamped near a small stream in the midst of a bamboo jungle. Two large rivers were crossed during the day,

called the Tumakee, or Dhunseeree, and the Toomkee, besides several other small rivulets.

25th.—We marched at seven A.M., and passed through the deserted villages of Deelong and Koodeerong, situated on rather high hills. The path was execrable the whole day, passing through dense heavy grass and *kuggra,* or reed jungle, as well as high bamboos and tree forest alternately, and our view was confined to the narrow path overgrown with jungle ten and twenty feet high. We crossed the Par river, and walked up the beds of four other streams; the first, five furlongs; the second, two miles one furlong; the third, four furlongs; and the fourth, two miles and a quarter. We were all much fatigued by climbing over huge boulders and round rolling stones, in and out of the water, ankle deep, for so many miles, and did not reach our camp near Semkur, till four, P.M., distance sixteen miles. As usual, we encamped in a dense jungle of bamboos, and, though it was only four P.M., we could scarcely see.

Our surveyor came into camp completely exhausted, and we thought he was attacked by fever; the fact, however, was, that he was a very abstemious man, and was always boasting of the inexpressible delight he experienced in satisfying his

thirst from every limpid stream, and eating sweet biscuits. By his own account, on this distressing march he had swallowed a quart of cold water, and he came into camp pale as death, and talked of going to bed directly. Perceiving, however, very clearly the position he was in, we gave him a pint of warm porter, and he rallied instantly, and, with a dish of hermetically sealed soup, and a slice of ham, he soon got over his fatigue, and ever afterwards he failed not to join our party in a substantial luncheon on cold fowl and bacon, or beef, with a glass of brandy-and-water.

Whilst leading a sedentary life in the plains, a sweet biscuit and a glass of water may be wholesome enough, but the wear and tear and exposure to wet and cold in the damp jungles, united with excessive fatigue in climbing steep hills, certainly require a more generous diet; for I am persuaded that half the sickness on these trips is generated by bad living and over fatigue. In the evening we all sat down together, and mutually sympathized in each other's sufferings over a glass of grog and a cheroot; and, before we retired to rest, we wished each other a happy Christmas night, but no more returns of such a trying Christmas day's journey, through a country swarming with wild elephants.

26th.—Having failed yesterday in reaching the village of Semkur, a short walk this morning of a mile brought us to it, when we discovered that the inhabitants had all fled to the jungle, fearing that they would be seized as porters to carry our baggage; not knowing that we required neither provisions nor porters, for we had brought what we required with us throughout the whole journey, and were thus quite independent of the Hill tribes, on whom it would be the height of folly to trust, when the success of the expedition depended on the freedom of its movements. Nothing, however, that we could say, prevailed on the inhabitants to return to their village. They urged the fear of being seized to act as porters; but this was a mere pretext; they had had an affray with the Nagahs some months previously, and were apprehensive that they might be deemed answerable for several who were killed on the occasion; but mutual injuries rendered retaliation unnecessary. All that was insisted on was a cessation from future hostilities.

Semkur is in the jurisdiction of Tooleeram, and is inhabited by a mixed class of Cacharees and Nagahs. A few years ago it contained 200 houses; but has dwindled down to thirty-nine. They have several salt springs, and, it is said, they used to supply the

Nagahs with a large quantity of salt in exchange for pigs, cloth, and rice, of which latter article they grew little, confining their attention chiefly to the manufacture of salt. Now, however, the salt springs are scarcely worked, or only sufficiently to supply their own wants.

27*th*.—We marched from Semkur at eight A.M., and travelled over an undulating country, through high reed grass jungle and bamboos, for four hours, when, suddenly, our guide declared he had forgotten the path, and this caused us little surprise, as the country was so full of wild elephants' tracks that it was impossible to discern the right path, unless we were certain we were proceeding in the proper direction. The grass, however, was so high that we could not see five paces before us; having, therefore, lost the road, we were quite bewildered. Our party consisted of about 300 men, and not a soul knew the route; in this dilemma we began to retrace our steps, and, after wandering about for an hour in all directions through a heavy jungle, with our clothes completely saturated, at last to our great delight, Ramdass, a Cacharee guide, climbed up a tree and soon put us on the right track to Hosang-Hajoo. After traversing a low ridge of hills for some time, exposed to the sun, we soon

became dry, and then descended into the bed of the Mahoor river, up which we wended our way for two miles and seven furlongs.

From this point, the ascent to the summit of the hill on which the village of Hosang-Hajoo is situated, is a distance of two miles. Being greatly fatigued, we had made up our minds to encamp on the banks of the Mahoor river for the night, but, gaining certain intelligence of our being so near our own more civilized villages in Cachar, in a moment all forgot the fatigue of the day, and a loud huzzah proclaimed our advance to Hosang-Hajoo, which we reached at four P.M., having come fourteen miles in eight hours. We were truly delighted at reaching this little stockaded out-post, garrisoned by twenty men of the Now-Gong police militia, as all our anxieties lest we should run short of provisions, become bewildered in the jungles, or be attacked at night by the Nagahs, and other contingencies, were now at an end. The Nagahs had built us comfortable huts, and we all spent a merry evening over a log-wood fire, and the meeting with letters from our friends added in no small degree to our joy and satisfaction, for we had been some weeks without receiving any dâk or post, as the letter-bearers wisely refused to cross the Dhun-

seeree river to join our party in a country, where the lives of friends or foes are in equal jeopardy.

28*th*.—Early this morning, the Nagah chief of the village of Hosang-Hajoo, invited us to accompany him through the village. We first went to a large building called Rangkee or the Daka chang, in which all the boys of the village reside, until they are married. The building was about sixty feet long, and twenty high, with gable ends. The inside of the house consisted of one large room, in the centre of which a wood fire was burning on the ground, and wooden stools were arranged in rows for the boys to sleep upon. At one end, a small room was partitioned off for the accommodation of an elderly man, who was superintendent of the establishment. There were forty boys assembled; we gave them presents of knives, beads, and scissors, and asked them, whether they would learn to read Assamese, if a schoolmaster were appointed to teach them. They were highly pleased with their presents, and declared they would most assuredly try to learn the Assamese language, if a schoolmaster were appointed. A schoolmaster was accordingly at once located in the village, and the Bible in Assamese and Bengalee, with other books, was supplied. In the course of a year, several boys

learned the first rudiments of the language, and one has attained such proficiency as to be able to write an Assamese letter. Who shall say that the Bible will not be the means of changing the habits and ideas of these wild savages? The experiment is worthy of trial; they have no caste or prejudices of creed to deter them from adopting Christianity; and, if successful in one instance, it cannot be deemed visionary to anticipate that the darkness and ignorance that now overshadow the land may be speedily dispelled, when our rule will prove a blessing to these benighted tribes, who would henceforth enjoy the fruit of their labours in peace and prosperity.

On leaving the boys, our attention was next directed to the Hilokee (a building of similar dimensions and construction with the Rangkee), devoted entirely to the use or residence of the girls of the village, who live in it altogether, in the same manner as the boys, until the day of their marriage. About twenty damsels presented themselves; they were all decently attired; a large sheet with coloured stripes was worn round the waist, extending to the knees, and a blue cloth was folded over the breast under the arms: a profusion of glass bead necklaces adorned their necks with a

number of brass ear-rings of all sizes. An old woman superintended the establishment, and the utmost order seemed to prevail in both the Rangkee and the Hilokee.

The boys and girls take their meals with their parents, work for them during the day, and at night retire to their respective asylums; all the youths see the girls during the day without the smallest restraint, and they select their own wives, and are married by the consent of their parents. In the afternoon, the chief came down to our camp with all the unmarried girls of the village, whom we had seen in the morning. They were all neatly dressed, and walked in file two deep, holding each other by the hand, and wheeled into line as regularly as a regiment on parade. All the young men of the village followed in the rear, singing and clapping their hands. At first we could not imagine what was the meaning of the procession, until we were told that they were going to honour our visit with a grand dance. Line having been formed, and the camp assembled, two damsels stepped out in front of the party, and danced with a peculiar kind of hopstep on one leg alternately, different from anything I have ever seen, in excellent time, to a song and clapping of hands by the

young men. When these damsels were fatigued, two others in succession modestly stepped out and kept up the dance, and when it was over, we gave each young lady a silver four anna piece, when they wheeled into line, and in ecstasies with their presents of scissors, needles, and beads, marched home with all the youths in regular order, singing as they went along.

In stature the Nagah women are short and athletic, with flat noses, small sharp eyes, the upper front teeth projecting a little, and the hair cut short whilst single; but, when married, the hair is allowed to grow long. They are coarse and plain, which is not to be wondered at, as they perform all manner of drudgery in the field, supply the house with water and fuel, and make whatever clothing is required by the family.

A vast change has come over the Nagahs in this village; formerly shells and beads would purchase anything; but it is not so now. The chief remarked, "Since we became British subjects, we have paid revenue in coin, and with it we can procure anything we require; we, therefore, no longer want shells and beads; we are now protected by a guard from the attacks of our neighbours, can cultivate our land, have cows, pigs and fowls,

and enjoy the fruit of our labour in peace and security."

The Nagahs are the most unprejudiced race I have ever met with as regards their diet. They eat dogs, rats, elephants, tigers, rhinoceroses, cows, pigs and fowls; but, strange to say, they have no ducks. A dead elephant is esteemed a great prize as well as a delicacy. The flesh is merely dried in the smoke and eaten without any further cooking, either roasting or boiling. They are extremely fond of spirituous liquors, the stronger the better; we gave them wine, beer, and brandy; the latter was highly approved of, but the bitter taste of the beer they did not at all relish; they did not either like vinegar or sauces, or anything sour; but sugar, jams, aniseed, or anything sweet, pleased them much, and they immediately asked for more. In fact they ate and drank of everything we offered them, and smoked our cheroots with great satisfaction. If such a people could receive a moral education, how soon would their habits of rapine and murder be changed, and their fertile, well-watered soil, be converted into one of the most beautiful tracts on which mortals could reside.

29*th*.—We marched from Hosang-Hajoo at seven A.M., and reached Thyloosa, a Cacharee village of

thirty-one houses, not far from the Deeyong river at one P.M. The path was very tolerable, the ascents and descents frequent, but not long or very steep, and the porters came into camp at three P.M.

30*th*.—To Alhoosa fifteen miles. In the course of the march we saw eight or ten small Cacharee villages; but we did not pass through any, our route being through thick bamboo jungle the greater part of the day.

31*st*.—To Patpoa fifteen miles five furlongs. As had been the case yesterday, the villagers had erected huts for our reception in a high bamboo jungle, and, on our arrival, the whole camp was supplied with provisions. Here the Havildar, who was taken ill at Semkur, and had been carried daily in a doolie, died on the march. This was the second man of the detachment who died from cold; every care and precaution had been taken to preserve the health of the troops, by getting them little huts, and supplying them with abundance of good provisions, and giving them a pig at almost every Nagah village, but all in vain. They are so imprudent after a fatiguing march, in casting off their clothes when greatly heated and exhausted, and at night in exposing themselves to the damp atmosphere over their fires, that it is wonderful we only lost three lives during the expedition.

1*st January*.—We were five hours marching to Digram, a distance of twelve miles. The path was good and the ascents slight; but our supply of water was scanty, consisting only of a couple of small pools of stagnant water, as the stream was dried up. Our course from Hosang-Hajoo to this point was most dreary; we scarcely met or saw any villages; our route for the last thirty miles was one continued monotonous trudge through bamboo jungles, from day to day, our view being confined to the footpath we were travelling along. I suppose, however, our route was the most direct, and fewer impediments to our progress were met with than would have been the case had we gone from village to village. We were constrained, therefore, to sacrifice the change of scenery, and the pleasant meeting and intercourse with the inhabitants of villages, to the necessity of moving onwards with the greatest facility; the more so as the Sipahees still continued to suffer much from coughs, colds, swollen, bruised and cut feet, which compelled us, after leaving Semkur, to cause three or four men to be carried along in doolies every march. To-day we saw a crow for the first time since we left Dheemahpoor and entered the hills. It is a remarkable circumstance that there are neither crows nor jackals in the Nagah hills, and their

absence failed not to make us feel very sensibly that we were in a different climate and country.

2nd.—Watjoor on the Deeyong river. We made our march to this place in three hours. Here we paid off the Kookies and Meekir Coolies or porters, who served us so faithfully throughout this expedition, which may now very properly be said to be concluded, as on this day we left the hills, and the next morning crossed the river Deeyong. From this point, in four easy marches through the plains, we reached the station of Now-Gong, whence we set out on 6th January, *viâ* Allunkah, Kamurakattah, and Kotteeatollee.

The result of our trip may be now briefly stated. A long and successful tour of 338 miles had been made from Now-Gong *viâ* Kachooamaree, Dheemahpoor on the Dhunseeree river, thence to Rojapomah, Mozomah, and Kono-mah, eastward. Our course was then to the south-west by Chah-mah, Beereh-mah, Sankur, Hosang-Hajoo to Northern Cachar, debouching by the Deeyong Mookh or Mouths, on the plains of Assam to Now-Gong. The following table shows the stages and distance of each day's journey:—

Date.	Names of stages from Now-Gong to	Number of miles.		Remarks.
1845.	Camp	mls.	fur.	
Nov. 20	Koteeatollee ..	12	0	Large village
21	Dubboka	10	0	Large village on Jummoonah river
22	Howrah-ghat ..	10	0	Small village on Jummoonah river
23	Kachooamaree .	12	0	Small village
24	Halted			
25	Seelbhetah	15	0	On the Jummoonah river
26	Mohungdehooa	10	0	Small village on Jummoonah river
27	Burjoree	15	0	A small stream, dense tree jungle
28	Dheemapoor ..	15	0	Dhunseeree river
29	Halted	—		
30	,,	—		
Dec. 1	,,	—		
2	,,	—		
3	,,	—		
4	,,	—		
5	Deeboo river .	10	0	Near pass of Sumokhuting
6	Rojapo-mah ..	7	1	Camp on west bank of Deeboo
7	Halted	—		River two miles from Rojapo-mah
8	,,	—		
9	Cheereh-mah ..	9	0	On the Deeboo river
10	Deeyong river..	7	0	Camp tree and bamboo jungle
11	Mozo-mah	3	0	Camp rice fields
12	Halted	—		
13	,,	—		
14	Cheereh-mah ..	10	0	On the Deeboo river
15	Rojapo-mah ..	9	0	
16	Halted	—		
17	,,	—		
18	,,	—		
19	Chahmah.....	9	4	Camp Kambao stream
20	NearBeereh-mah	8	1	On the banks of a river
21	Beereh-mah ..	3	0	Hills covered with grass, small stream
22	Camp tree jungle	7	0	Small spring, but little water
23	Bosompoe-mah	13	3	Small spring
24	Bamboo jungle	11	2	,,
25	Bamboo jungle	16	0	,,
26	Semkur	1	0	Small village
27	Hosang-Hajoo..	14	0	Little water from a spring on the hill
28	Halted	—		
29	Thyloosa	8	3	
30	Alhoosah.....	15	0	
31	Mere path from Deeyong river	15	5	
1846.				
Jan. 1	Camp Digram..	12	0	Little water
2	Watjoor	7	0	On the Deeyong river
3	Allunkah.....	8	4	Muddy water stream
4	Kamura katta..	10	0	
5	Koteeatollee ...	12	0	
6	Now-Gong	12	0	
	Total	338 mls.		

Not a shot was fired throughout the journey, or the slightest sign of a hostile feeling manifested towards the mission, which wisely was too powerful to admit of opposition. We were everywhere received with a friendly spirit, and the chiefs of each village rendered cheerful submission, and presented tribute of elephants' tusks, cloths, and spears, according to their means. Mr. Thornton, who accompanied the expedition, surveyed the route traversed, and plotted off on a large scale a most valuable map of the greatest portion of the Nagah hills attached to the district of Now-Gong. The grand objects of the expedition, the conciliation of the tribes, and the acquirement of more accurate knowledge of the country, were, therefore, considered to have been more fully attained than on any former occasion.

The Kookie porters, inhabitants of Northern Cachar, in the Now-Gong district, who accompanied us throughout the journey, are so little known, that they merit distinct notice. The information given about them in the next chapter, is gathered from public reports, and inquiries carried on personally among the chiefs of the tribe and the people itself.

PART II.

THE HILL TRIBES OF ASSAM.

Ford. & West. Lith^rs

Kookie Warrior.

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PART II.

THE HILL TRIBES OF ASSAM.

CHAPTER VI.

The Kookies—Population—Government—Marriage rites—Criminal code—Funerals—Religion—Hunting and war—Customs—Occupation—Productions—Character—Dress—Revenue—Villages.

THE Kookies aver, that they emigrated from Tipparah to Northern Cachar, in the reign of Kishen Chunder, sixty years ago, and in the years 1828, 1829, Gobind Chunder, Rajah of Cachar, employed them to wage war with Tooleeram Senaputtee. On one occasion they, in concert with Tooleeram's cousin, Gobind-Ram, completely took him by surprise, set fire to his house, cut up a number of his followers, and dispersed the remainder; and after this event, finding the country probably free from enemies likely to disturb them, they remained in their present position in Northern Cachar.

In the year 1846-47, several colonies of new

Kookies immigrated from Tipparah, *viâ* the bed of the Barak river, and joined their brethren in Northern Cachar. The number of tribes, and the total population of all classes residing in Northern Cachar, is estimated by the following Table at 21,345 souls :—

Number.	Name of Clans.	Number of Houses.	Persons in each House.	Total of each House.	
1	Hozae Cacharee	234	5	1170	
3	Hill Cacharee	788	5	3940	
3	Meekirs	364	5	1820	
4	Old Kookies	667	5	3335	Kookies 10,910
5	New Kookies	1515	5	7575	
6	Nagahs	701	5	3505	
		4269	5	21,345	

Exterminating wars amongst themselves having compelled the Kookies to seek shelter and protection in Cachar, their attention seems wholly given to agricultural pursuits, and they are apparently completely weaned from all desire of pursuing their old custom of perpetual war with their neighbours. They live on the most friendly terms with the Kachang Nagah and Meekir tribes, and are greatly respected by them for their known martial character. The marauding Angahmee Nagahs look on the Kookies with awe or respect, and have, in consequence, never dared to attack them.

In the Tipparah district there are innumerable tribes or clans of Kookies under the rule of hereditary Rajahs or chiefs. In Northern Cachar the principal old clans are four in number, viz.: Khelemah, Ranthoe, Bete, Lamkron, and with the last colony several Rajahs or chiefs have arrived, whom all the Kookies seem to respect. They are divided into three clans, as follows :—

	Villages.	Houses.
1. Jángsen clan . .	28 . .	. 907
2. Táddaee „ . .	12 . .	. 556
3. Shingshoon „ . .	1 . .	. 52
Grand Total	41	1,515

For each of the old clans there are five chiefs or elected managers of the community. The first is called a Ghalim; the second, Gaboor; the third, Burchapea; the fourth, Chota Chapea; and the fifth, Tangba. These five persons are elected by the Raj clan, or village community, and they form a council for the settlement of the affairs of the tribe, in accordance with the wishes of the people. In all affairs of importance they assemble together, and nothing is decided on excepting by the majority of the votes of the most influential

members of the clan, given through the elected council.

On the death of the Ghalim, the Ghaboor succeeds him and not his son or brother, and promotion is thus by regular rotation. On the fifth being promoted to the fourth grade, his vacancy is filled up by a general election of a proper person from the tribe to fill the vacant seat. The council decide all petty disputes, and impose fines on the delinquents for all trivial as well as heinous offences, and the penalty of death is not inflicted either by the Rajah or the council for theft, adultery, or murder, and whatever is realized from fines by the council is divided amongst them according to their respective grades. When a fine is paid with a pig, the animal is killed and cut up into pieces, and portions are given to all the chiefs, as well as to the owner of the house in which the pig has been cooked, and the remainder is given in equal portions to the public. On marriages and deaths, and on occasions of worshipping the gods, the chiefs are first presented with spirituous liquor, and after them others of less dignity, which is considered a great mark of respect.

Marriage is not consummated before the age of puberty. When a youth is desirous of marrying

into any family, his parents visit the parents of the damsel selected, and present a pitcher of spirituous liquor. If this be refused, the proposed alliance is declined; but, if the liquor is accepted, the youth is sent for, and, if his father is able to pay in kind, or coin, twenty-five rupees (2*l.* 10*s.*) to the parents of the damsel, the marriage soon takes place; otherwise, the young man is formally made over to the care of the parents of the damsel, to remain in bondage for a certain number of years, generally two or three, and sometimes five. Should he fall sick, he returns home, and the period of absence does not count as part of the time agreed upon to be served. When the period of service expires, a grand feast is given in proportion to their means, and the marriage ceremony is performed by the Ghalim, or chief of the village. The bride and bridegroom place their feet together on a large stone, and the Ghalim, after sprinkling both with water, addresses the bride thus:—

"This man has taken you to be his wife: be faithful, and have no evil communications with other men. Live with him, cheer him with liquor and meat, and make him happy all the days of his life, and may you be blessed with a numerous progeny. If you act otherwise, you will be a worth-

less creature, and will be fined heavily." With this peroration the marriage ceremony concludes, and thenceforward they are deemed man and wife.

If a woman leaves her husband, and is guilty of adultery, the injured husband invites the members of the council to visit him at his house, places a jug of liquor before them, and states his complaint. The offender is immediately summoned; and, if guilty, does not hesitate to confess his guilt; the council of chiefs then fine him, in property or coin, about forty rupees. The injured husband receives thirty rupees of the fine, and the council retain ten rupees for their own remuneration. The faithless woman is not taken back by her injured husband, but is permitted to remain with the defendant.

If a maiden is seduced, as soon as the parents hear of it they have her married at once to her lover, with the usual ceremonies. If a widow is seduced, a pot of liquor is exacted as a fine; but the chiefs do not interfere in a matter of seduction as in a case of adultery.

When a man's house is robbed, or cotton or grain is stolen from the field, if the thief is apprehended, he is fined ten rupees, which is paid to the plaintiff, who then purchases a pig worth one rupee, and four annas worth of liquor, and gives

both to the council for their decision on his case. If the charge of theft is not substantiated, the complainant is fined a pitcher of liquor.

A year after the death of a man's wife he summons her relatives, treats them with liquor, and solicits permission to cut his hair. In the second year he again assembles his late wife's brothers and relatives, and gives them a feast of a pig, rice, and liquor, intimating that his wife has been dead so long, and that he is desirous of marrying again. If his request be acceded to, he may again enter the state of wedlock; but without permission he cannot marry again. A widow is bound by the same custom as a widower. She may marry again after three years have elapsed from the death of her husband, with the consent of her deceased husband's relatives.

If a man dies at night his body is burned in the morning. Vegetables and rice are placed on the spot where the body was burned, and the relatives of the deceased address the ashes of the consumed corpse thus, "We bid you farewell to-day; whatever money and rice you have acquired, leave with us." On the following day friends resort to the deceased man's house, and offer up a sacrifice of a fowl to the gods Tevae and Sangron. Liquor is

freely partaken, the good qualities of the deceased are recited, and much lamentation is made. When a married man dies, all his friends assemble and bewail their loss. Vegetables and rice are cooked, and placed on the left side of the corpse with a gourd or bottle of liquor. The whole party are then treated with liquor. The youths of the village prepare a bier, and the corpse is washed and dressed in new clothes to be burned. They place on the corpse his sickle, spear, eating utensils, and personal ornaments, and a rupee on his mouth. The whole of the villagers then, dressed out in their war habiliments, accompany the corpse to the funeral. The men who bear the body are entitled to the rupee placed on the mouth of the deceased. The widow puts on all her best clothes and ornaments, adorns herself with flowers, and joins the procession bearing the body to the funeral pyre. On the body being consumed to ashes, the widow puts aside her ornaments and flowers, and takes a final leave of her husband's remains in the words, "Thus long have we lived together, this day are we separated!" and, placing rice and vegetables on the ashes of her husband, with reverential obeisance to the same, she returns home with dishevelled hair.

The funerals of the Beli clan of Kookies are conducted in the following fashion. Soon after death the corpse is washed with warm water, and covered up with a cloth; after which friends are summoned to meet together at the house of the deceased, where, after passing the day and night in taking liquor and food, each individual gives the corpse a new cloth, the body is interred with the clothes, ornaments, eating utensils, sword and spear, and the company then return home. The day after the funeral a bamboo arrow is made, in front of the house where the deceased resided, and after being spit on by every one, is then thrown into the jungle. A tree is likewise planted, and a fowl sacrificed, which concludes the obsequies.

Most indistinct notions are entertained in regard to religion. The Kookies certainly seem to believe in a future state of retribution and a plurality of gods or spirits, who, they affirm, have equal power. The principal deities worshipped are called Tevae and Sangron, to whom fowls, pigs, and spirituous liquor, are offered in sacrifice on all occasions of sickness, famine, or other affliction, which they conceive is the surest method of averting evil and bringing their wishes and undertakings to a successful termination.

The Kookies have no images or temples of any kind. When the spirit departs from the body, the angel of death is supposed to convey it away according to its merits in this life. If a good life has been led in this world, the soul is transported, with a song of triumph, to the gods, ever after to remain at ease, and free to go whither it listeth. The sinner, however, is subject to a variety of torments—to impalement; to be cast into a deep burning gulf; hanging; and to exposure to the excruciating agony of being immersed in boiling water. As to how long liberty and happiness are enjoyed by the good, or how long the wicked are tormented in the next world, no definite ideas seem to prevail. They imagine they are born again in some other state.

Injuring the property of others, or taking it without payment; using violence; abusing parents; fraudulently injuring another; giving false evidence; speaking disrespectfully to the aged; marrying an elder brother's wife; putting your foot on, or walking over, a man's body; speaking profanely of religion —are acts of impiety.

Feeding the hungry; giving alms to the poor; liquidating the debts of the needy; giving shelter to, and assisting, travellers; bestowing anything required by another to make an offering to the deity;

respecting superiors; fanning a person when overcome with fatigue and heat; being kind to children; teaching the minah, parrot, and bheemraj, to talk; worshipping the gods; bringing a person home at night by torchlight, when bewildered in the jungles; obedience to parents and superiors; giving water to the thirsty, and being courteous to everybody—are meritorious deeds.

The Kookies are fond of hunting, and destroy many elephants for the sake of the tusks, which always meet with a ready sale in our markets. The weapons used are a small bow with poisoned arrows, a spear, and a dao or sword, a most destructive kind of heavy short weapon. They are fond of war, but not apparently for the mere sake of plunder, but to gratify a spirit of revenge, or, it is said, to procure heads for some religious ceremony on the death of a Rajah. They do not attack their enemies openly in the day, but steal on them by night; and having surrounded the place to be attacked, at the break of day rush in on every quarter and exterminate young and old, women and children, indiscriminately. If completely successful, some few may be spared to be kept as slaves. Previously to setting out on a hostile incursion, they offer up a pig as a sacrifice

to the deity. If any one of the party is slain by the enemy, the corpse is buried on the spot without burning, the customary ceremonies being dispensed with, and neither relatives nor friends lament together on the occasion. If victorious, they bring home the heads of their enemies, and, on reaching their villages, the warriors, dressed out in their war attire, have a dance, beat drums, play bamboo-pipes and the instrument called *jhanjh*; after which the heads of their enemies are fastened to a pole, and stuck up at a spot where three or four roads meet together.

In a memoir on Sylhet, Cachar, and other districts, by the late Captain Fisher, formerly Superintendent of Cachar, that officer states, "The object of the Kookie inroads on the plains is not plunder, for which they have never been known to show any desire, but they kill and carry away the heads of as many human beings as they can seize, and have been known, in one night, to carry off fifty. These are used in certain ceremonies performed at the funerals of their chiefs, and it is always after the death of one of their Rajahs that their incursions occur. The Kookies have been accused of cannibalism, and I am aware of one instance in which the charge seemed substan-

tiated, but they disclaim the imputation with much vehemence."

In my tours in the hills I have had a good deal of communication with the Kookies, as they are the most hardy and best Coolies in the district for hill travelling. The Kookie chiefs have likewise frequently visited me at Now-Gong; and whenever I put the question to them, whether they did not eat the flesh of human beings slain in battle, they have invariably promptly denied the existence of such a custom in the tribe with apparent abhorrence; and although nothing comes amiss to a Kookie—the elephant, rhinoceros, and beef, being equal delicacies—we have been unable to prove that they are or ever were cannibals.

Lieutenant Vincent describes the new Kookies as follows:—"The new Kookie clans have an excellent form of government. They are presided over by Rajahs and Muntrees, who decide all matters of dispute brought before them; and in such respect do they hold their Rajahs that their word is law. One, among all the Rajahs of each class, is chosen to be the Prudham or chief Rajah of that clan. The dignity is not hereditary, as is the case with the minor rajahships, but is enjoyed by each Rajah of the clan in rotation. All the

Rajahs are connected, having sprung from the same original stock; nor can any other person succeed to this dignity until the present race of Rajahs is extinct. Should none of the family survive, the family of the chief minister would become the head of the clan, and, consequently, that from which the Rajahs would be selected; but there can be little fear of any such contingency, as the person of the Rajah is held to be sacred. For instance, should two clans go to war, the inferior members on both sides might be killed, but no one would think of killing either Rajah. It was on this account that the Kookies were so incensed at one of their Rajahs having been killed by the Nimzae Nagahs in August, 1850. The very night the Rajah died they assembled their forces from all quarters, to the number of 300 or 350 fighting men, and on the following morning moved to the attack of Nimzae. The Nagahs, though warlike and prepared to repel them, were terrified at the approach of such an overwhelming body and fled in haste from the village, and the Kookies followed them up, overtook and killed their Gong Boorah, the others only saving themselves by flight."

The Kookies have some strange customs, one

being that of smoke-drying the dead bodies of the Rajahs. After the death of a Rajah his body is kept in this state for two months before burial, in order that his family and clan may still have the satisfaction of having him before them. He is then interred with grand honours, cows and pigs being killed to feast the whole clan, and pieces of their flesh sent to distant villages. The heads of the animals killed at his burial are placed on large posts of wood over his grave. His son, however young, is then elected Rajah, and looked up to with an almost superstitious respect. Should a Rajah fall in battle by any chance, they immediately proceed on a war expedition, kill and bring in the head of some individual, hold feastings and dancings, and then, after cutting the head into pieces, send a portion to each village of the clan. This was done on the murder of the Kookie Rajah by the Nimzae Nagahs. A party set out on a war expedition and brought in a head from some Nagah village tributary to Minupoor, and performed the ceremonies above described. This is considered in the light of sacrifice to appease the manes of the deceased chief.

The tusks of all elephants killed by hunting-parties are the property of the Rajah to whose

village the successful hunters belong; and as a reward the Rajah bestows on them the flesh of the slain elephant, or feasts them with a pig, which is considered ample remuneration.

Should any subject conceal a tusk, or indeed the smallest trifle, which the Rajah wished for and had demanded, he would immediately be tried by the Rajah and Muntrees, and himself and family degraded to perpetual slavery. All the property they possess is by simple sufferance of the Rajah.

Theft among them is punished in the same way, by condemnation to perpetual slavery. The parties thus doomed become the property of the Rajah, are compelled to till his lands, and perform every kind of work required.

The Kookies are inveterate smokers, and even children of five years old are seen with a bamboo pipe in their mouths. The men smoke pipes, either of plain bamboo, both bowl and stalk, or brass bowls ornamented with a bird or some other device with a bamboo stalk. The women smoke "hubblebubble," or the tobacco drawn through water. This water, when well impregnated with tobacco-juice, is put by in a goblet to be drunk by the men, who sip a mouthful at a time, retaining it in their mouths for half and hour and up-

wards, probably for the sake of the bitter narcotic it contains.

The men, like the Nagahs, when not employed in cultivating or preparing their lands, sit basking in the sun, and smoking their pipes; the women, on the other hand (here again like the Nagah women), are never idle. When not employed in household duties, or the cultivation of their fields, they are to be seen with their pipes between their teeth, smoking hard, and working away at the loom, on which they prepare four different kinds of cloths. A white cloth with a black border for the men; a blue dyed cloth, also for the men, of about five feet long, both worn wound round the body; a striped cloth, of about eighteen inches broad, worn as a petticoat, reaching from far below the navel to half-way down the thigh; and a thick quilt made of pieces of raw cotton woven into a cross woof of cotton thread, the same as is mentioned under the head of the old Kookies.

The Kookies cultivate rice and cotton, but in a manner quite opposed to the system pursued by the Cacharees and Nagahs, the former of whom raise three crops of rice from the same land, and the latter four. The Kookies raise only one crop, and then relinquish the land and cut down new

forests of bamboo for the cultivation of the succeeding year. Their rice is of a very superior description to any I saw in Northern Cachar, and is raised from seed brought from their own country and Muneepoor. The crop is not cut till November, whereas that of the other Hill tribes is cut in August and September; their cotton is also very fine. Besides this they grow tobacco, and all the usual vegetables met with in the hills.

The men are powerful and hardy, but turbulently inclined. Having been accustomed to war in their own country, they are exceedingly well suited for soldiers, and those that have been enrolled in the Kookie levy at Silchar have turned out well. The Kookies in Northern Cachar are most anxious to be enlisted in the Now-Gong militia, a desire that should be gratified, as likely to civilize them. They are frugal in their habits, no man thinking of taking a wife until he is able to support one, as he has to pay a dowry for her in the first instance to her parents, varying in amount according to the rank of the girl. They are also particularly modest and decent, each man living with his family in a separate house. The widows also live in houses of their own (in this

respect like the Nagahs and Cacharies), built for them by the villagers.

The men wear a large cloth, sometimes two, wrapped loosely round the body, and hanging from the shoulder to the knee. Underneath this they wear nothing, the whole body being bare, in which they consider there exists no want of modesty, as such has been their custom from time immemorial. When engaged in any occupation, they either wrap their cloth round the lower part of the body, or twist it round the waist with the ends hanging down in front, the back being left quite bare. They are always to be seen with a belt slung across the shoulder, suspending at the side either a sheath with their dâo or hatchet in it, or a knitted bag containing their pipe, tobacco, and tinder-box. The belt, in the case of a poor man, is merely a piece of deerskin, about two inches in breadth; in that of a wealthy man, four or five inches broad, decorated with four or five rows of cowrie shells. They also wear a kind of iron skewer, or, if poor, a porcupine's quill, stuck into their back hair, which is tied together in a knot.

One of their ornaments has a very singular appearance. The ear is bored in the fleshy part,

and drawn out and stretched over a thick silver ring, one of which I found on measurement to be five inches and a quarter in circumference, and one inch in breadth. Of course it takes time for the ear to attain this size; but they commence at an early age by putting pieces of bamboo and cane into the pierced holes, which gradually stretch the skin to the required size. A singularly distinguishing mark between the Jángsen and Taddoee clans is, that the former have the skin of the ear stretched to its utmost extent, while the latter have very small holes pierced in the cartilage.

The women wear a short striped petticoat, reaching from the upper part of the stomach half way down to the knee. Married women have their breasts bare, but all virgins are covered, wearing a similar cloth to the petticoat wound round the bosom underneath the armpits. They wear their hair prettily plaited at the back, the two ends being brought round in front and tied just above the forehead in the form of a coronet. Like all hill people, the Kookies are most dirty in their habits, very seldom washing their bodies, which are covered with dirt and smoke. Probably this disinclination to perform necessary ablutions, among all hill tribes, may be accounted for by the water

near a hill village being generally very scarce, and also by the coldness of the climate.

The Rajahs of the New Kookie clans annually collect at the end of the harvest a pig and two maunds of dhan (paddy), or an estimated value of three rupees from each house, besides other collections made on extraordinary occasions, and all the elephants' tusks brought in throughout the year by the hunters from their villages. They have hitherto presented only one elephant's tusk annually to Government; this year four tusks and seventy rupees in cash were collected from them, and they are assessed for the future at one rupee a house, an arrangement which I understand finds great favour among the Ryots, as they hope their Rajahs will be content with Government commission, and relieve them from their former exactions.

The sites of the Kookie villages are well chosen on the broadest parts of the highest ridges, with water near at hand, generally a small hill stream. Some of the chief villages contain as many as 200 houses, commodiously built on platforms raised between three and four feet from the ground. Every part of the house is formed of bamboo, there being but few trees of any kind, and little

or no grass in Northern Cachar, as the character of the whole country is a dense forest of bamboo. The posts of the houses are bamboos, driven deep into the ground; the walls are formed of split bamboos, of which the platform is also made, and the thatch is composed of bamboo leaves neatly put on. For greater security against the inclemency of the weather, an outer covering of split bamboos fastened together is occasionally laid over the thatch. The house is divided into two rooms of a tolerable size.

The houses of the poorer members being so good, it may be supposed that the Rajah has a fine building for himself; it may indeed be called a palace, being of great length, height, and breadth (I have seen some upwards of 100 feet in length) built with large posts, and thatched with grass, or grass and bamboo leaves intermingled. It is raised four feet from the ground, and is very neat inside, having a long room in the centre for the use of the Rajah, with small rooms on either side partitioned off for the slaves, who cook and perform other menial offices. No animals, with the exception of dogs, are kept within the house, which stands in a large courtyard, and, in addition to the usual stockading round the

village, is, in the case of the chief Rajah of the clan, surrounded with a double palisade for his greater protection. The minor Rajahs have a single palisade round their houses.

CHAPTER VII.

Expeditions against the Angahmee Nagahs—First expedition from Muneepoor—Second ditto—First expedition from Now-Gong—Second, third, fourth, and fifth Expeditions from Now-Gong.

The country occupied by the Angahmee Nagahs, south of Now-Gong, is bounded on the north by the Dhunseeree river, on the south by a high range of mountains, forming the boundary between the Muneepoor territory and Now-Gong, Poplongmaee being the most southern Angahmee Nagah village within the district. The western boundary extends as far as Hosang Hajoo. The limit of the eastern boundary is still undefined and unexplored; but the Deeyong river on the north-east separates the Lotah Nagahs in the Seebsaghur district from the Angahmee Nagahs.

The first time the Angahmee Nagah country was ever visited by Europeans was in January 1832, when Captains Jenkins and Pemberton, with a party of 700 soldiers, and 800 Coolies, or porters,

to carry their baggage and provisions, marched from Muneepoor in progress to Assam. The route pursued was *viâ* Sengmie, Mueeyangkhang, Muramkhunao, Mohee Long, Yang, Poplongmaee, Tireea-mah, Sumokhooting, Dhunseeree river, Mohung Dehooa and Ramsah, which latter place they reached about the 23rd of January 1832. The whole party suffered much from the want of provisions, and, in consequence, were obliged eventually to march the whole day through a heavy dark forest, until they arrived at Dehooa, where their wants were supplied. The party were opposed in their progress from Yang to Poplongmaee by the Angahmee Nagahs, and having no idea of the effect of fire-arms, their resistance was most determined. They rolled down stones from the summit of the hills, threw spears, and did their utmost by yelling and intimidation to obstruct the advance of the force, but all in vain. The village of Poplongmaee, consisting of 300 or 400 houses, was occupied by the troops, and a constant firing of musketry was necessary to keep the Angahmee Nagahs at a distance. A stockade was taken at the point of the bayonet, and the village was burned, in which some lives were lost and many persons were wounded. Cunning, trea-

cherous, vindictive, and warlike, the Angahmee Nagahs had hitherto never encountered a foe equal to contend with them, and in utter ignorance of the effect of fire-arms, they vainly imagined that no party could penetrate through their territory. Luckily, the force was well supplied with ammunition, and overcame all opposition.

In the cold season of 1833, Lieutenant Gordon conducted the second expedition into the Angahmee Nagah hills, twenty-five miles to the east of the route pursued by Captain Jenkins. He was accompanied by the late Rajah Gumbhur Sing with a force sufficient (Captain Pemberton remarks in his report on the eastern frontier) to overcome all opposition; but a powerful coalition was entered into by all the Hill tribes to arrest his progress, and ultimate success was entirely owing to his fire-arms.

Northern Cachar having been annexed to the Zillah of Now-Gong, on the 5th January 1839, Mr. Grange, Sub-Assistant to the Commissioner, was entrusted with a detachment of the 1st Sebundies, the present 2nd Assam Light Infantry, fifty men of the Cachar levy, and a party of Shan Police Militia, to proceed to the Angahmee country, and endeavour to repress the yearly incursions of

the Angahmee Nagahs into Cachar for plunder and slaves. He reached the stockaded Thannah at Goomogoojee in Northern Cachar, on the 11th January, and not receiving any instructions from the Superintendent of Cachar, he deemed it necessary to pay that officer a visit, and set out on the 13th, and reached Silchar on the 16th. Returning thence to the Goomogoojee Thannah, he was occupied till the 26th January in collecting provisions, and Coolies to carry them, before his force could commence the march to the Angahmee country. His route then lay *viâ* Semkur, Beereh-mah, Balookhi-mah, Muhye, Tireeah-mah to Tokojinah-mah, thence to Cheereh-mah, Rojapo-mah, Sumokhoo-ting, and Mohung Deehoa, which place he reached on the 15th March. The Shans were then located at Mohung Deehoa. The levy returned to Cachar, and the Sebundy detachments to Gowahattee.

Throughout the journey the party was badly provided with provisions, and had but few Coolies to convey their baggage and food, and even those were perpetually absconding. As they were harassed and jaded by daily long marches, and exposed to much wet weather, besides frequent attempts of the Nagahs to attack the camp at night, it is

surprising that the expedition terminated without further disaster than one or two Coolies having been speared by the enemy.

On the 3rd December, 1839, Mr. Grange was again deputed to visit the Angahmee Nagahs. He set out with the Shan detachment from Dheemahpoor to Sumokhoo-ting on the 21st December, leaving the Jorchath Militia to follow thence, when supplied with Coolies. On approaching the village of Sumokhoo-ting, as was anticipated, the Nagahs were not amicably disposed towards the detachment, and assembled with their spears ; but a little persuasion induced them to put aside their weapons, and to erect huts for the party. At night, however, they endeavoured to spear the sentries, and broke off all communication, stating that their spears were their Rajahs'. This conduct admitting no excuse, their grain was forthwith seized, and a stockade built, independent of the village. The Jorchath Militia having arrived, they were placed in charge of the stockades containing the grain, and Mr. Grange set out on an excursion on the 2nd February to Rojapo-mah.

Descending the Sumokhoo-ting hill to the south-east, he went up the stony bed of the Deeboo river, till he arrived opposite the low range of hills on

which Rojapo-mah is situated. Here the Nagahs had assembled to obstruct his progress; but the chief, Karebee, having been induced to come into camp, a friendly intercourse ensued.

On the 3rd February the party reached Tireeah-mah; here they were, as on the first tour, treated with civility by the people. On the 4th they ascended the great southern range of mountains, 6,000 feet high, by the path taken by Captain Jenkins in his route across the hills from Muneepoor in 1832. The ascent was extremely steep and harassing, and the whole party did not reach the small river below the village of Poplongmaee, or Kono-mah, till three P. M.

The next day the party encamped on the banks of the Tobool river in the same fences occupied a few days before by the Muneepoor troops. Proceeding up the rocky bed of the Tobool river a short distance on the 6th, towards the rocky ridge on which Yang is situated, all the Nagahs of that village assembled, and would not for a long time come down and show the way to the ground on which the Muneepoor troops had encamped. At last, after much persuasion, three men were induced to point out the route; but, having gone a short distance, they set up their hideous war-

howl and rushed down a precipice. This act of treachery brought on them several shots from the Sipahees, who, after considerable difficulty, at length gained the encamping ground occupied by Captain Jenkins in 1832, between Yang and Moelong.

The country here is extremely rugged and repulsive in appearance, being composed of high rocky ranges, with but little flat ground at their bases. The sides of the ridges are covered with low bushes and small patches of grass, and a few scattered stunted firs. During the whole of the night the Nagahs were very troublesome. They set fire to the grass in all directions; and though the Moelong Nagahs had joined those of Yang, the ground being well pangied, that is, studded with sharp wooden spikes, no night attack was attempted. Having advanced thus far, and seeing no prospect of meeting the Muneepoor force, Mr. Grange commenced on the 7th February to retrace his steps to Poplongmaee. He had hardly reached the footpath, which runs along the side of the Yang range, when the crash of boulders and stones made him aware of the treacherous attack of the Yang villagers.

His party luckily divided into two divisions

without confusion, and thus escaped utter annihilation from the rolling stones. The rear joined the rest without accident, as soon as a diversion was made in their favour, by establishing on a knoll of the range a party who, by keeping up a brisk fire on the enemy, succeeded partially in checking them in rolling down stones; and in the interval the rear took advantage of the cessation, and extricated themselves from their perilous position in a frightfully narrow and difficult pass. The Nagahs, however, having assembled in considerable numbers, the party were necessitated to cross over to the opposite range, to avoid returning beneath steep declivities exposed to the rolling stones of the enemy without being able to return their fire.

After gaining the opposite range in safety, in spite of the jungle being set on fire in the rear of the retreating party, Mr. Grange reached the road on which he had advanced from Poplongmaee, and encamped on his former ground in the bed of the Tobool river; but their fences had all been destroyed, and they were much impeded in their movements by the ground in every direction being studded with pangies.

On the 8th, still continuing to retreat towards

the heights of Poplongmaee, and anticipating the intentions of the Nagahs to roll down stones on the party as they passed beneath, Mr. Grange took a party of forty men and dislodged the enemy from their breastworks; after which, joining the rear-guard with the baggage, he drove the enemy before him, and took possession of the village of Poplongmaee, a portion of which had been burned by the Muneepoor troops, who had just left that part of the country. For the recovery of the sick, and of those wounded by the pangies, Mr. Grange was obliged to remain in the village of Poplongmaee four days, and on the 13th continued his retreat towards Sumokhoo-ting. The enemy appear to have been humbled by this visit; for, on Mr. Grange's departure, they said they were afraid to return to their village as long as he remained, but on a future occasion they would not oppose him, as they desired peace; for three Nagahs had been killed, and several badly wounded.

Owing to the sick and wounded, the retreat from Poplongmaee to the Deeboo river was fatiguing, occupying from nine A. M. till dusk of evening; but no attempt whatever was made by the enemy to molest the party as they retired *viâ* Tireeah-mah, Rojapo-mah, to Sumokhoo-ting,

which place they reached on the 15th February. The sick were placed in the stockade, on the summit of the Sumokhoo-ting hill, and being joined by some of the Jorchath Militia, Mr. Grange again set out on the 18th February to accomplish a meeting with some lawless Angahmee Nagahs further eastward.

The first day he encamped at Mijeepeh-mah, and the next at Pripheh-mah, where a Coolie going for water was wounded by the Nagahs. Leaving Pripheh-mah on the 20th, before passing through a track of grass jungle, Mr. Grange took the precaution to halt and set fire to the jungle, and clear the path of pangies. In the interval, four Nagahs made their appearance in the rear, evidently to set fire to the grass previously to an attack in front. Instead of returning or meeting the party in a friendly manner, they assumed their usual war attitude of defiance, and commenced jumping about and spinning their spears. This conduct immediately brought the fire of the Sipahees upon them, when one Nagah was killed, and another, though severely wounded, effected his escape by rolling down a precipice. The path being strewed with pangies, these had to be removed before the party could advance and form their fenced camp,

about four miles in advance of Pripheh-mah, on the banks of a small stream. In the evening, beacons or lights, as signals, were observed in all directions on the high hills, the number of lights at each station signifying that the party was halting, advancing, or returning.

The progress of the party on the 21st was very slow, in consequence of the number of pangies required to be removed from the path; and although the distance was only five miles, the encamping ground at Jappeh-mah was not reached till three P.M. The Nagahs deferred their attack on the party till within a mile of the village, at a rocky part of the hill, when five or six men sprang out of the leading files and threw their spears, and before the Sipahees had time to fire they rushed down the precipice. Several men of the guard were struck by the spears; but their clothes being tied on loosely they escaped uninjured. The enemy had erected an embankment, which they deserted, on a flank movement being made to attack. The village was carried without much opposition, although the entrance was very strong. The passage was through a narrow lane with a stone wall on each side, and a single plank of considerable thickness formed the door. The

villagers did not again show themselves till night, when they pelted stones at the party from an adjoining high piece of ground, concealing themselves behind stone walls.

The next day, after searching for the well some distance from the village, when the whole party had partaken of the water they experienced very unpleasant effects, being afflicted with a dizziness and heaviness of the upper eyelids which made it difficult to keep them open. On examining the well or reservoir, it appeared that the enemy had bruised and steeped a poisonous root in the water. The Nagah prisoners said, that while the root was fresh its effects were what had been experienced; but, if allowed to rot, it would kill all who partook of it in three or four days.

Jappeh-mah is an old village of 300 or 400 houses; and at this period the inhabitants oppressed and plundered all the small weak neighbouring villages. The Nagahs of Jappeh-mah were fully prepared for the visit; they had hidden their grain in pits and crevices of rocks in the jungles, and had even taken off the grass roofs from their houses to prevent them being burned. The party remained here, safely stockaded in the village six days, and

destroyed all the grain, houses, planks, stools, and everything they could meet with; but still the Nagahs refused to come in and submit to our authority. A lesson, however, was taught them; the time had now arrived when they could no longer attack defenceless communities with impunity, or without being attacked in return, and utterly defeated. Hitherto, confiding in their remote, inaccessible position, their insolence was so great as to imagine that there was no power sufficiently strong to repress their marauding raids.

After much difficulty in providing for the conveyance of the sick, Mr. Grange commenced on the 27th February to retrace his steps to Sumokhoo-ting. On passing through Mijeepeh-mah, he learned that three men had been killed and several wounded in the encounter at Jappeh-mah; and as they did not attempt to obstruct or molest the party in this retreat, the success of the expedition was complete.

On reaching Sumokhoo-ting on the 29th Feb., Mr. Grange found that, through the carelessness of a Sipahee, his grain godown had been burned down, and the Nagahs of Sumokhoo-ting assuming a threatening attitude, by spinning their spears and showing other signs of hostility, it became neces-

sary on the 1st March to capture a few prisoners as hostages for the good behaviour of the village.

On the following day the whole party encamped at Dheemahpoor, on the Dhunseeree river, distant from Sumokhoo-ting thirteen miles. Here, in one of the densest forests of Assam, the Shan Police Militia were permanently located in a stockade, for the protection of the frontier throughout the year from the marauding inroads of the Angahmee Nagahs. Thus terminated the second military expedition from Now-Gong against the Angahmee Nagahs. A few months after, the nine prisoners captured at Sumokhoo-ting, and taken to Now-Gong, were permitted to return to their hills, after having sworn to keep the peace, and pledged themselves to remain in future in entire obedience to the British Government.

On the 26th November, 1840, Lieutenant Bigge, Principal Assistant to the Agent of the Governor-General, left Now-Gong to make a tour through the Angahmee hills. He entered the hills on the 22nd January, 1841, with a detachment of the 1st Assam Light Infantry. On his arrival at Sumokhoo-ting, the Nagahs deserted the village; but in a few days, having restored confidence, and placed his provisions in charge of a guard, he

was enabled to set out on the 27th January, and visited the following villages :—Mijeepeh-mah, Pripheh-mah, Geeroopheh-mah, Sassah-mah, Mozo-mah, and Kono-mah. Thence he proceeded across the southern range to Poplong-maee, and turning northward returned to Sumokhoo-ting *viâ* Tireeah-mah and Rojapo-mah on the 9th February. His route then lay through Rojapo-mah, Chah-mah, Lehah-mah, Jalookeh-mah, Balookeh-mah, Semkur, on to Hosang Hajoo in Northern Cachar; which place he reached on the 22nd February, having, for the first time, traversed the country without meeting any opposition.

To arrange the boundary between the Now-Gong district and the Muneepoor state, Lieutenant Bigge proceeded on the 24th November, 1841, *viâ* Northern Cachar to Silchar, and thence to Muneepoor. On the 2nd January, 1842, he sent in a joint report with Captain Gordon, Political Agent at Muneepoor, in which he established the summit of the high range of mountains as the proper boundary line. Returning to Now-Gong on the 29th January, Lieutenant Bigge set out for Dheemahpoor on the 8th February, where he was met by a detachment of the Assam Light Infantry, and advanced as far as Rojapo-mah. Till the 10th

March he was busily occupied in a fruitless endeavour to cut open a road along the banks of the Deeboo river, east of Sumokhoo-ting. The rainy season, however, setting in, he was obliged to desist from the attempt and return to Now-Gong.

No expedition was sent into the Angahmee Nagah country in 1843, and the tribes continued their annual predatory and murderous raids as usual. In 1843 they made two inroads, killing four persons each time, and carried off a considerable quantity of property. In 1854, two incursions were made into the Rengmah Nagah hills; three persons were killed in the first foray and six in the second, and on both occasions the people were plundered of their property. Although eighty-nine persons were concerned in both attacks, from the difficult nature of the country, not a single individual was ever captured, the whole party having retreated to their hills as soon as they had committed these depredations. Becoming still bolder, and finding that a guard of one Naick and four Shan Police Militia Sipahees, detached from the stockade at Hosang Hajoo for the protection of the small village of Lunkye in Northern Cachar, obstructed, or was a check on their marauding incursions, they treacherously surprised the little party at

night, on the third October, 1844, and killed three Shan Sipahees and a boy; one Sipahee alone escaping with a wound to Hosang Hajoo, to tell the fate of his companions.

In consequence of the frequent audacious raids of these freebooters, Captain Eld, Principal Assistant, accompanied by Mr. Sub-Assistant Wood, and a detachment of fifty men of the 2nd Assam Light Infantry, set out from Now-Gong on the 10th December, 1844, with the express object of capturing the murderers of Sipahees at Lunkye. On arriving at Hosang Hajoo, Captain Eld learned that the Nagahs of the village of Assaloo were apparently implicated in the attack made on the small guard at Lunkye, through having afforded shelter in their village to the Angahmee Nagahs, even if they did not join in the attack. Mr. Wood was accordingly directed to visit the village. On his approach, however, whether from fear or a sense of their guilt, they took to immediate flight, and their village was in consequence burned. Proceeding thence eastward, they reached Beereh-mah, and a portion of the villagers being implicated in the late treacherous massacre at Lunkye, and having absconded, their huts also were burned to the ground. Captain Eld then returned, *viâ* Dhee-

mahpoor, to Now-Gong on the 10th January 1845, and deputed Mr. Wood to visit the villages of Mozo-mah and Kono-mah from Dheemahpoor, with the Assam Light Infantry detachment. He went up the bed of the Deeboo river to Cheerehmah, thence to Tokojinah-mah, Mozo-mah, and Kono-mah. Mr. Wood demanded of the village of Kono-mah the immediate surrender of the Nagahs, who had killed the Shan Sipahees at Lunkye. After considerable parley they restored the four muskets which they had carried off from Lunkye, but would not listen to the demand of delivering up the culprits; and as they appeared to pride themselves on their prowess and glory in their successful raids, there was no alternative but to undeceive them, and convince them of their inability to persevere in these practices with impunity.

With great promptitude, Mr. Wood immediately advanced with his detachment towards the village of Kono-mah; the inhabitants instantly lost courage on the approach of the troops, and fled with precipitation to the jungles, and part of the village was in consequence reduced to ashes.

Such was the result of the fifth expedition. A barbarous, unprovoked massacre of three Shan Sepoys had been committed. Conciliatory mea-

sures were first tried for the apprehension of the delinquents without avail, and then the destruction of three of the enemies' villages ensued with as little effect. In this predicament it fell to my lot to succeed to the management of this state of affairs. Before, however, I proceed further on my journey into the Angahmee hills, I may here give some account of the Rengmah Nagahs and Meekirs, whose hills we have skirted on our way to Dheemahpoor, and with whom we have held constant communication.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Rengmah Nagahs—Revenue settlement—Manners and customs—Meekirs—Mode of assessment—Revenue settlements—Religion and customs of the Meekirs.

ALTHOUGH the plains of the district of Now-Gong have been under a revenue assessment since the conquest in 1824-25, we have been slow in making much progress towards subjugating the Hill tribes, or acquiring information regarding them. In 1839 Mr. Grange, Sub-Assistant Commissioner, seems to have been the first European officer, who met the Rengmah Nagahs in the vicinity of Mohung Dehooa, on his way to the Angahmee Hills. Subsequently, scarcely a year has passed without the officer in charge of the district having had communication with them; but no revenue settlement was ever made with them, or written agreement taken from them to pay revenue, till February 1847, when Captain Butler, Principal Assistant, induced several of the most

influential Chiefs to visit Now-Gong, on which occasion they readily assented to be taxed at one rupee per house, and gave him a written agreement to that effect.

This measure being approved by the Agent to the Governor-General, Mr. Sub-Assistant Masters was deputed in December 1847, to enter the Rengmah hills from Golaghaut; but, after visiting many villages, that gentleman found the country so heavy and impassable from the dense wet jungles, that he was constrained to return to the plains at Kageerunga. He again met with the Rengmah Nagahs on his route over the Meekir hills *viâ* Bannenee, Sildhampoor, on to Mohung Dehooa; when the first revenue settlement with all the Rengmah Nagah villages discovered—thirty-two in number—was successfully accomplished.

FIRST REVENUE SETTLEMENT CONCLUDED WITH THE RENGMAH NAGAHS OF ZILLAH NOW-GONG, ASSAM, FOR TWO YEARS, FROM 1255 TO 1364, B.S. —FEBRUARY, 1848, A.D.

Number.	Names of Villages.	Names of Chiefs.	Number of Houses.	Gross Assessment.			Deduct Commission at 12*s.* 8*d.* per cent.			Net Revenue.		
				rs.	as.	p.	rs.	as.	p.	rs.	as.	p.
	Yangkoo	Yangkoo Phookim	29	25	0	0	3	2	0	21	14	0
	Nonbasong...	Umbasong Gounborah..	16	13	0	0	1	10	0	11	6	0
	Bahauring...	Soreijoo do. do.....	15	12	0	0	1	8	0	10	8	0
	Migaloo	Migaloo do. do.....	22	15	0	0	1	14	0	13	2	0
5	Tellamahah..	Kampee do. do.....	34	25	0	0	3	2	0	21	14	0
	Chehong	Chengoo Phookun	35	27	0	0	3	6	0	23	10	0
	Behong.....	Behong Gounborah.....	17	12	0	0	1	8	0	10	8	0
	Dengapah....	Chengoo Phookun	25	18	0	0	2	4	0	15	12	0
	Ta Goolie ...	Luggoosung Gounborah	33	25	0	0	3	2	0	21	14	0
10	Thillasomah	Kootooka.....	21	15	0	0	1	14	0	13	2	0
	Giyang	Guduring	10	5	0	0	0	10	0	4	6	0
	Nahor	Suntang	20	17	0	0	2	2	0	14	14	0
	Old Korroo ..	Kantang.....	14	9	0	0	1	2	0	7	14	0
	New Korroo..	Karroo Phookun.....	12	9	0	0	1	2	0	7	14	0
15	Kahung.....	Kahung do.	21	16	0	0	2	0	0	14	0	0
	Kologong....	Nizing Kola	24	18	0	0	2	4	0	15	12	0
	Koomaree....	Surizing Sathtollah	24	20	0	0	2	8	0	17	8	0
	Old Hillee ...	Kedemba.....	21	16	0	0	2	0	0	14	0	0
	Old Athong..	Serizing	32	17	0	0	2	2	0	14	14	0
20	New Athong .	Tezebe Phookun	15	15	0	0	1	14	0	13	2	0
	New Hillee ..	Late Chocta, deceased ..	7	7	0	0	0	14	0	6	2	0
	Gadangarah..	Lungzookem Gounborah	13	10	0	0	1	4	0	8	12	0
	Kamargong ..	Nissebe do. do.	16	11	0	0	1	6	0	9	10	0
	Khasang	Sankora, 1st	53	41	0	0	5	2	0	35	14	0
25	Missang.....	Sankora, 2nd.....	20	17	0	0	2	2	0	14	14	0
	New Boghoree	Tezeroo	27	19	0	0	2	6	0	16	10	0
	Dalloro.....	Dalloo.....	19	17	0	0	2	2	0	14	14	0
	Beling	Khehung.	42	34	0	0	4	4	0	29	12	0
	Bethar	Bessalloo	10	9	0	0	1	2	0	7	14	0
30	3rd Hillee....	Hembeh.....	16	13	0	0	1	10	0	11	6	0
	Rummoo	Merika	12	8	0	0	1	0	0	7	0	0
	Old Missang .	Pupeka	14	10	0	0	1	4	0	8	12	0
			689	525	0	0	65	10	0	459	6	0

REMARKS.—The first twelve Chiefs will pay their revenue into the Collector's Treasury at Now-Gong; the remaining Chiefs will pay their revenue into the Treasury at Golaghaut.

Rate of assessment one rupee per house, excepting old men, women, and widows.

From the preceding Table, it appears, that thirty-two villages contained 689 houses which, at four persons to each house, would give a population of 2,756 persons. The Rengmah Nagahs are evidently descended from the Angahmee Nagahs; and it is said that, in consequence of oppression and feuds in their own tribe, they emigrated to the high hills occupied by the Tokophen Nagahs; but further dissensions and attacks from the Lotah and Angahmee Nagahs compelled them to take refuge on their present low hills in the vicinity of the Meekirs.

At the present day the Rengmah Nagahs appear degenerating. In physiognomy they differ but little from the Cacharee tribes, and many have married Cacharee and Assamese wives. The villages are small, and they have but few domestic animals; among these the principal are some cows of the hill breed, pigs, and fowls. They procure brass ornaments from the village of Gesenge, and spears from the Angahmee Nagahs. A considerable quantity of cotton is grown in their hills, besides rice, which they barter for salt, hand-bills, beads and hoes, to petty hawkers, who proceed up the river Jummoona with small supplies from Now-Gong, and sadly impose on these uncivilized tribes in their dealings with them, both in price and weight.

Like other Hill tribes, they acknowledge the power of a plurality of gods; and sacrifices of cows, pigs, and fowls, are offered on all occasions. Marriage is regarded merely as a civil contract, and no religious ceremonies are performed. According to the means of the bridegroom, fowls, dogs, and spirits, are given as a present to the parents of the damsel selected, and her consent being obtained, as well as that of her parents (for she has a right to refuse), a grand feast is given by the bridegroom on the day of his marriage to the whole village. In return, they are obliged to present the newly-married couple with a new house in the village.

All offences of a trivial nature are settled by a council of elders of the village, who impose fines on the culprits. The Rengmah Nagahs, like the Angahmee Nagahs, inter their dead, and place the spear and shield of the deceased in the grave; a few sticks with some eggs and grain are laid upon it, and the funeral ceremonies conclude with lamentations and feasting.

MEEKIRS.

The tract of country situated in the Now-Gong district, called the Meekir Hills, extends from the Kuleanee river east to the Jummoonah river west of Dubboka, about sixty miles in length, or seven days' journey. On the north, the Meekir hills are bounded by the plains of the Meekirpar Mehal, the Mongahs of Rungobegur, Kageerunga, and Bokakhat. From north to south, to the Jummoonah river, the distance in a straight line may be thirty-five or forty miles. The Meekir villages and cultivation extend eastward only as far as the Kuleanee river in Morung. Beyond that river the Rengmah boundary commences, and terminates with the Dhunseeree river, separating Now-Gong from the Seebsaghur district.

The Meekirs generally inhabit the interior portion of the hills; but a majority of their villages are within a day's journey of the plains. According to the tradition of the tribes, they were originally settled in Tooleeram Senaputtee's territory, under petty chiefs of their own selection. Some years ago, they were conquered by a Rajah of Cachar, from whose oppression they were driven

to take refuge in Jynteea. Meeting there with the same treatment, some emigrated to Deemoroo, Beeltollah, and Ranee in the district of Kamroop; the remainder took up their present abode in the locality described above. In this position, however, having the plains of Assam on the north, a portion of Cachar on the south, and being only separated from Jynteea by a space of thirty miles of low lands, the Meekirs were subjected to continual demands from these neighbouring states. Their chief reliance, however, was on the Rajah of Assam, who appointed their principal chief over the whole clan, and collected a tribute from them in kind, valued at about 338 rupees per annum.

The articles given were :—

300 bundles of cotton	300	rupees.
300 bamboo mats	10	„
300 bundles of nalooka, the bark of a tree used as a perfume .	16	„
300 Sanchee pat, the bark of a tree, used formerly and even to this day, as paper to write on	12	„
Rupees . . .	338	

No regular revenue was paid to the Cachar and Jynteea states; whatever was exacted in kind or

corn was more in the shape of black mail; and, from all we can learn at the present day, the aggregate amount realized by both states may be estimated at about half the sum paid to the Rajah of Assam, or the annual sum levied by the states from the whole tribe, did not, probably, exceed in value 500 rupees.

In consideration of submitting to pay tribute to the Rajah of Assam, a strip of land, called Meekirpah Mehal, at the foot of the Meekir hills, was granted to the Meekirs under the Khelwaree system, for 461 rupees 8 annas 11 pice. On the death of the Meekir Chief, Kan Burrah, in 1840, and the abolition of the Khelwaree, and introduction of the Mongahwaree, system in 1241 B. S., or 1835-36 A. D., the revenue amounted to 5,002 rupees 7 annas 10 pice. On the change of system at that period, the Mehal of Meekirpah being divided into nine Mongahs, ceased to be managed by the Meekirs. Four beels or lakes had been granted to the Meekirs rent free by the Rajah of Assam, but no *sunnud*, or deed of gift, has ever been produced. The revenue derived from these lakes was as follows:—

	Rs.	As.	P.
1 Moree Kullung	12	0	0
3 Maharool	6	0	0
3 Pathoree	8	0	0
4 Jamoogooree	12	0	0
Rupees	38	0	0

In addition to the lakes, five ferries across the Kullung were also granted by the Rajah of Assam rent free, to induce the tribes to resort to the plains for the purpose of trading with the Assamese in grain and dried fish. The estimated value of these ghats, or ferries, was a mere trifle, viz.:—

1. Depholoo Ghat or Ferry . . .	2	8
2. Sanchoa Mookh „	2	8
3. Ooneehattee „	2	8
4. Meekirhath „	2	8
5. Nikamolee „	2	8
Rupees	12	8

The total value of the lakes and ferries may be estimated at 50 rs. 8 as. This amount, however, was not realized in cash, but in kind. Each ferry paid annually to the Meekirs twelve poorahs of rice, or four maunds, twenty seers. This was not the perquisite of any one chief, but the whole tribe

of Meekirs was entitled to a share of the grain. The same system prevailed in respect of the lakes or fisheries. They were annually let out and paid for in fish, whenever the Meekirs resorted to the plains to trade. In 1846, the ferries being no longer let out by the Meekirs, and the bheels or lakes likewise being let by them for a mere trifle, this circumstance was publicly noticed, and the collector brought them on the regular rent-roll of the district, as there was no reason whatever for their being any longer exempted from taxation, as they had no right to privileges not enjoyed by the public community. Mongahwarre settlements having been concluded with the chiefs, they receive from Government a money commission for the trouble of collecting the revenue, as well as other Mongahdars. The Meekirs asserted that they had a rent-free grant of 1,000 poorahs of land, styled Aankar, granted to them by one of the Rajahs of Assam; but they have never been able to produce a copper *phulla* or *sunnud* deed of gift, either for the land, lakes, or ferries: all claim, therefore, for either one or the other was inadmissible. The amount of tribute, realized from the Meekirs in the year 1241 B. S., or 1834-35, for three years, will be gathered from the fol-

lowing table, extracted from the profit and loss of articles sold, which had been given in as tribute :—

A. D.			
1834-35	168	14	4
1835-36	232	8	0
1836-37	249	14	9
Rupees	651	5	1

In 1837-38, the system of taking tribute in kind was abolished, and the Meekirs were formed into three imaginary grades or classes, and taxed at a certain rate for each grade, though amongst themselves no such grade or rank existed.

First Revenue Settlement effected with the Meekirs for 1837-38, A.D.

Number.	Name of Mongahs, or Dooars.	Name of Chiefs.	3rd Rate House. 1r. 8as.	2nd Rate House. 3 rs.	1st Rate House. 4 rs.	Total Number of Houses.	Gross Revenue.	Deduct Commission, 12 rs. 8 as. per cent.	Net Revenue.
							rs. as.	rs. as.	rs. as.
1	Koteeatollee.	Teena ..	52	24	7	83	178 0	22 4	155 12
2	Bamoonee ..	Sanhabee	43	36	13	92	224 8	28 1	196 7
3	Salonah	Habhee..	99	108	22	229	560 8	70 1	490 7
4	Dehooa	Mye.....	52	82	1332	267	856 0	107 1	749 0
5	Moorung ...	Horbeeha	24	31	2	57	137 0	17 2	119 14
			270	281	177	728	1956 0	224 8	1711 8

The assessment of the Meekirs in grades or classes, in a trial of two years for 1837-38, 1838-39,

A. D., not giving the result or satisfaction anticipated, it was deemed expedient still further to simplify the system, and one universal rate was adopted for the whole tribe, the poorest man paying the same as his wealthy neighbour, viz. two rupees four annas per house, whether it was large or small, capable of containing one family or two, for any extent of land they thought proper to cultivate, and this rate has continued to the present day.

REVENUE SETTLEMENT FOR 1839-40, A.D.

Number.	Name of Dooar, or Mongah.	Number of Houses.	Rate per House.	Gross Revenue.	Deduct Commission 12-8 per cent.	Net Revenue.
			Rs. A.	Rs. A.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
1	Koteeatollee	69	2 4	155 4	19 6 6	135 13 6
2	Bamoonee...	45	„	101 4	12 10 6	88 9 6
3	Salonah	128	„	288 0	36 0 0	252 0 0
4	Dehooa.....	210	„	472 8	59 1 0	413 7 0
5	Moorung....	45	„	101 4	12 10 6	88 9 6
6	Deekaroo....	65	„	141 12	17 11 6	128 0 6
7	Deesa	244	„	308 8	63 9 0	144 15 0
		806		1768 8	221 1 0	1547 7 0

As the Meekirs take up fresh land every two or three years, and remove their dwellings to different parts of the Hills, it is necessary to make a new settlement every year with their chiefs. The revenue, therefore, fluctuates considerably, which will be seen by the following Table for 1851-52.

Revenue Settlement of the Meekir Hills for 1258 B.S., or 1851-52 A.D.

Number.	Names of Mongah.	Number of Houses.	Rate per House.	Gross Revenue.	Commission.	Net Revenue.
			Rs. A.	Rs. A.		
1	Koteeatollee	94	2 4	211 8	36 13 2	174 10 10
2	Bamoonee	447	,,	1005 12	161 1 0	844 11 0
3	Salonah.....	44	,,	99 0	19 15 2	79 0 10
4	Moorung	92	,,	207 0	36 2 4	170 13 8
5	Deekaroo	105	,,	236 4	40 8 7	195 11 5
6	Deesa.....	161	,,	362 4	59 7 0	302 13 0
7	Kokurakata	38	,,	85 8	17 14 10	67 9 2
8	Hurluk Purbut..	46	,,	103 8	20 10 0	82 14 0
9	Amla Purbut...	78	,,	175 8	31 6 10	144 1 2
10	Thereho Purbut.	57	,,	128 4	24 5 4	103 14 8
11	Kantee Purbut..	25	,,	56 4	13 8 7	42 11 1
12	Singemaree	58	,,	130 8	21 10 10	108 13 2
13	Joonthong	96	,,	216 0	37 8 0	178 8 0
14	Baguree	153	,,	344 4	56 11 9	287 8 3
		1494		3361 8	577 11 5	2783 12 7

Revenue Settlement of Meekirs residing in Northern Cachar, for 1851-52, A.D.

Number.	Names of Mongah.	Number of Houses.	Rate per House.	Gross Revenue.	Commission.	Net Revenue.
			Rs.	Rs. A.	Rr. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
1	Chargeemee	114	1	114 0	14 4 0	99 12 0
2	Rebur	113	,,	113 0	14 2 0	98 14 0
3	Dekanoo.	56	,,	56 0	7 0 0	49 0 0
4	Runkae	73	,,	73 0	9 2 0	63 14 0
		356		356 0	33 8 0	311 8 0
	Grand Total ..	1850		3717 8	622 3 5	3095 4 7

No correct census of the Meekir population to this day has been taken; but from the revenue statement given in by the Meekir Chiefs for the year 1851-52, there are—

In the Meekir hills 1,494 houses
In Northern Cachar 356

1,850
5 persons in each house.

9,250

So that the population for the whole tribe in the Meekir hills and Northern Cachar, amounts to about 9,250 persons. This estimate, however, may be deemed less than the real number, considering the extent of country occupied by this tribe; but in the absence of other authentic documentary proof it would be futile to offer speculative conjectures. For, strange to say, no public European officer has, till the present year, visited the Meekir hills or their villages, to ascertain by a personal examination the number of houses in each village. Even then it would be no easy matter to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion in regard to the Meekir population, as from five to thirty individuals frequently reside in one house; and they are so superstitious that they view with

great dread any idea of numbering the people, apprehending that sickness, ill-luck, and deaths, would be the inevitable consequence of such a procedure, and on this account, mainly, have we hitherto abstained from interfering with their prejudices, or causing offence.

However, when Captain Butler, Principal Assistant, and Mr. Sub-Assistant Masters, passed through Bamoonee, Koteeatollee and Dubboka Dooars in January, 1848, and several other Dooars, inhabited by Meekirs, which were also visited by Mr. Masters, a great extent of country was observed to be under cultivation with cotton and rice, and the Meekirs were scattered in every direction, in solitary huts, or in small villages of six or seven, and no village exceeded twenty houses. There seems little doubt that many families live together to avoid paying the house-tax. Their houses are built on bamboo platforms, supported by innumerable bamboo posts, eight or ten feet high, with a ladder, or oftentimes only a single pole cut into notches or steps, to ascend by, which is removed at night, and they are thus secure from the intrusion of wild beasts.

The houses vary in size according to the number of families residing under one roof. Some are

thirty, some forty feet long, and twenty feet wide, with the grass roof brought down almost to the platform. The whole building consists of one large room; they keep their grain in baskets in the room, and men, women, and children, all lie down together on their respective mats in their allotted places almost in a state of nature, for they wear only the smallest piece of cotton cloth round the waist, which extends not even to the knees, and the women in their villages do not cover the breast. They are, nevertheless, chaste, and in their moral behaviour superior to the people of the plains.

The Meekirs have no particular creed, or any written language of their own, yet their dialect differs from that of every other tribe in the province, and we are at a loss to conjecture whence they came, or from what race they sprang. They abstain from eating the cow, more, it is believed, from prudential than from religious motives, as they consume every other kind of animal, and are much addicted to the use of spirits made from rice. Although they have no priest to keep up the form or practice of religion, they do not totally neglect to make offerings to unknown deities. It is reported that they worship the sun and moon, and

make sacrifices to both, of hogs, goats, and fowls. In fact, these sacrifices may be considered more in the light of feasts, as the portion allotted to the deity is very scanty, and composed of the refuse parts. They also sacrifice to rivers, and large stones, or trees, in their neighbourhood, which are considered the abode of the deities. On the appearance of any epidemical disease amongst them, they have recourse to sacrifices; and if the wrath of the deities cannot be appeased—that is, should the sickness not abate—they leave their houses and property, and retire to the densest forests, closing all communication with their former habitations. In the year 1834-35, the cholera raged throughout the Hills, and so alarmed were the inhabitants that there was scarcely a single village that did not remove to a new site.

The Hindoo Gosams, or priests of Assam, have hitherto succeeded in converting to Hindooism only those Meekirs residing on the plains, or adjacent low hills. On conversion they enter the class termed Kach, and are allowed to retain nearly all their customs, the priests being satisfied with the yearly contributions derivable from these disciples, and are utterly regardless of their principles. They are, however, required to give up the use of spirituous

liquors, and in lieu they acquire the pernicious habit of eating opium.

Marriage amongst them has nothing religious; it is a simple contract between the parties. The suitor goes to the parents with a quantity of spirits; if his offer is agreeable, they drink together, and all friends are invited to a feast. When the suitor takes the bride home, another feast is given by him, when the ceremonies are completed. Sometimes a man voluntarily engages to serve as a bondsman for a number of years to the father of the promised bride; and when the period of service expires the marriage takes place with the usual festivities. Polygamy is not practised, and they reproach their countrymen of the plains for having adopted the Assamese custom. They burn their dead and bury the ashes, giving a feast before and after the ceremony. In short, without eating and drinking scarcely anything of importance is performed.

Unlike any other Hill tribes of whom we have any knowledge, the Meekirs seem devoid of anything approaching to a martial spirit. They are a quiet industrious race of cultivators, and the only weapons used by them are the spear and Dao handbill for cutting down jungle. It is said

that, after an attempt to revolt from the Assamese rule, they were made to forswear the use of arms, which is the cause of the present generation having no predilection for war. Although they use spirits immoderately, no affrays take place among them; robberies very seldom occur, and those of a very trifling nature. Petty thefts are generally decided amongst themselves. The principal products of the Meekir Hills are cotton, canoes, wax, lac, ginger, and rice. They change their cultivated lands every three years, and, as they prefer clearing fresh tracts to tilling the old, large logs of timber are becoming very scarce.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ANGAHMEE NAGAHS.

The Angahmee Nagahs — Number of villages and population — Manners and customs — Mode of warfare — Religion — Funerals — Oaths — Omens — Mode of tillage.

THE following table shows the number of Angahmee Nagah villages with the probable number of houses and inhabitants in each. We have discovered up to the present day seventy-eight villages, containing 19,949 houses; and, allowing five persons to each house, the population amounts to 99,745.

Number.	Names of Villages.	Number of Houses in each Village.	Number of Persons in each Village, at five Persons per House.
1	Sumokhoo-Ting	150	750
2	Tassephamah	30	150
3	Rojapo-mah	140	700
4	Teja-mah	10	50
5	Tesheh-mah.....	40	200
6	Tokojinah-mah	20	100
7	Mijeepeh-mah.....	105	525
	Carried forward	495	2475

Number.	Names of Villages.	Number of Houses in each Village.	Number of Persons in each Village, at five Persons per House.
	Brought forward....	495	2475
8	Peereh-mah.....	27	135
9	Pripheh-mah	37	185
10	Tiseepah-mah.....	200	1000
11	Siteke-mah	50	250
12	Tisejee-mah.....	30	150
13	Phegue-mah	30	150
14	Vepomah	50	250
15	Phirkekremah	50	250
16	Lehah-mah.....	30	150
17	Tehephah-mah	100	500
18	Themo-mah.....	300	1500
19	Mekche-mah.	—	—
20	Hehtohphe-mah.....	300	1500
21	Ghareephemah	500	2500
22	Tsecha Bagwee-mah	550	2750
23	Tsecha Basah-mah.....	300	1500
24	Nezhah-mah	500	2500
25	Keroo-mah	200	1000
26	Tseswee-mah	40	200
27	Thegue-mah.	40	200
28	Keykroo-mah	200	1000
29	Chedeh-mah.....	300	1500
30	Duho-mah.....	80	400
31	Rejoomutoo-mah.....	60	300
32	Lohjheh-mah	1000	5000
33	Chadoo-mah.....	200	1000
34	Tsoophagho-mah	—	—
35	Thengeghoo-mah.....	800	4000
36	Kekreh-mah	1000	5000
37	Thehoseh-mah.....	60	300
38	Khegoh-mah.....	200	1000
39	Keedee-mah	300	1500
40	Khegha-mah, seven villages..	1600	8000
41	Kraloo-mah	200	1000
42	Thoobohmeh-mah.....	200	1000
43	Mahree-mah.....	—	—
44	Tselho-mah.....	—	—
45	Sapo-mah, seven villages	2000	10,000
46	Quage-mah.....	60	300
47	Vesmeh-mah	600	3000
48	Mee-mah.....	300	1500
	Carried forward	12,989	64,945

Number.	Names of Villages.	Number of Houses in each Village.	Number of Persons in each Village, at five Persons per House.
	Brought forward....	12,989	64,945
49	Keegue-mah	600	3000
50	Tara-mah	300	1500
51	Veeheha-mah	100	500
52	Kohe-mah	820	4100
53	Joshe-mah	600	3000
54	Kono-mah.....	500	2500
55	Lache-mah	140	700
56	Geeroopheh-mah.....	80	400
57	Kohroo-mah	60	300
58	Mozo-mah	300	1500
59	Mazah-mah.....	100	500
60	Needshoo-mah	40	200
61	Jakah-mah	300	1500
62	Tseshegoo-mah	300	1500
63	Chephoh-mah.....	—	—
64	Tchootwitzoo-mah.....	—	—
65	Kechybad Swee-mah...	—	—
66	Simpho-mah	—	—
67	Kilsah Leekah-mah	200	1000
68	Tsesmyzhoo-mah	1000	5000
69	Keepoo-mah	100	500
70	Koloozhoo-mah	170	850
71	Bogwee-mah.....	100	500
72	Isehboo-mah.....	100	500
73	Ugoh-mah.....	100	500
74	Upreh-mah	150	750
75	Pooselboo-mah.....	300	1500
76	Nysobzhoo-mah	200	1000
77	Phooleh-mah.....	300	1500
78	Ghagheephah-mah	300	1500
	Total	20,249	101,245

The villages are generally built on the highest and most inaccessible hills, north of the great range of mountains separating Assam from Muneepoor and Burmah. Every side is stockaded, and

a ditch generally encircles the most exposed part of the village, which is studded with *panjies*. The sloping side of the hill is likewise not uncommonly cut down so as to form a perpendicular wall, and thus fortified, these villages could offer serious resistance to any force assailing them without fire-arms. These positions, however, are frequently ill chosen, being commanded by adjoining heights, from which the internal economy of the village can be viewed, and a well-judged attack with fire-arms would render opposition useless.

The houses are all built with gable ends, twelve or sixteen feet wide by about thirty or forty long. The roof is made of grass and bamboos, and the eaves come down within a foot of the ground, as a greater protection from storms. The house is generally divided into two rooms. On one side of the entrance, or sitting apartment, huge baskets, five feet high and four feet in diameter, are placed, and in a corner the spirit tub. Planks of wood are arranged round the fire on the ground for seats, and fowls, pigs, children, men and women, seem to have free access; the filthy state of their dwellings can, therefore, be imagined. In front of each house large stones are placed, on which the Nagahs delight morning and evening to sit and sip, with a

wooden ladle from a bowl, a most offensive liquor made of rice.

The houses, though irregularly built, are generally in two lines, the gable ends of each row of houses projecting towards the main street. Into this everything is thrown, and it being the receptacle for the filth of the whole village, consequently the odour is so offensive that it is scarcely possible to remain long in the main road. All of the small villages are subject to the large villages Mozo-mah, Kono-mah, Kohe-mah, and Lopsheh-mah, and they are obliged to secure their own safety by paying them an annual tribute of cloths, fowls, cows, pigs, &c., according to their means, or as much as will satisfy the rapacity of the freebooters.

The young men are fine, well proportioned figures, and by no means bad looking. Some tie their hair up in a knot on the head; others allow it to flow loose and about four inches long, which gives them a very wild appearance. Their complexions are brown, mouths large, nose flat, high cheek bones, sharp small eyes, and a cunning, arch, severe, expression of countenance when excited, that truly denotes their traits of character, cruel, treacherous, and vindictive. No part of the body is tattooed, as is the custom with the Nagahs of

Upper Assam. The women are short, stout, and unprepossessing in appearance. They weave the clothing required for the family, work in the fields, cut and bring in firewood and water, and perform every description of drudgery.

The dress of the Angahmee Nagahs consists of a blue or black kilt, prettily ornamented with cowrie shells; and a coarse brown cloth made of the bark of the nettle plant is loosely thrown over the shoulders. The warrior wears a collar round the neck, reaching to the waist, made of goats'-hair, dyed red, intermixed with long flowing locks of hair of the persons he has killed, and ornamented with cowrie shells. No one is entitled to wear these insignia of honour, unless he has killed many of his enemies, and brought home their heads. No regular government can be expected to exist amongst wild uncivilized tribes, who are ignorant of the use of letters or the art of writing, and whose dialects differ and are scarcely intelligible to the tribes on the adjoining hills, and whose leisure time is spent in the diversion of surprising each other in hostile attack, rapine, and murder.

Still, every Angahmee village has a polity of its own. Their government is decidedly democratic; for, although each village community has a nomi-

nal head or chief, it is evident their chiefs have no absolute power over the people. They do not collect any revenue, neither can they issue any orders with any chance of being obeyed, if the measure or act is not popular. In all transactions of importance, such as setting out on a predatory inroad, or to take revenge on any village, the aged and warriors of the village assemble together and decide on what is to be done; but it is believed that the counsel of the warriors is more frequently adopted than the sober advice of the elders and peaceably disposed. Every man is his own master, avenges his own quarrel, and from private jealousies, animosities, and injuries, innumerable murders and quarrels frequently occur.

The authority or title of the chief of a village is hereditary. The eldest son, on the death of his father, or even before his death, if very infirm, succeeds to the dignity. In most villages there are generally two chiefs, but their authority is nominal. Their orders are obeyed so far only as they accord with the wishes and convenience of the community. They possess no exclusive power to take cognizance of offences against the person or property of individuals. The crime of murder cannot be expiated; the relations of the murdered

person instantly, if possible, spear the murderer, without reference to the council of elders, unless the delinquent take refuge in another village, when he may escape for years, but he is never safe. Years after the deed has been committed he may be surprised and murdered, for revenge is considered a sacred duty never to be neglected or forgotten. Adultery is also an offence that admits of no compromise. If a man's wife is seduced, the injured husband will surely spear the seducer on the first opportunity. Thefts and other petty offences are disposed of by a council of elders, and a fine is imposed according to the degree of injury sustained. On such occasions couch shells, spears, salt, beads, rice, or cotton cloths, are decreed to be given by the culprit, and the property, or its equivalent, to be restored.

The Angahmee Nagahs appear, from all we can learn, to have no idea of a future state of retribution of good or evil. They imagine there are many gods, or good and evil spirits, residing in their hills. To one, they offer up sacrifices of cows and *mithuns;* to another, dogs; and to a third, cocks and spirituous liquor. Each god, or spirit, has in their estimation the power to afflict them with sickness, ill luck, and a variety of calamities, or to

make them successful in their incursions, and prosperous in their undertakings, or daily occupations. They choose their own wives; the damsel's consent, as well as that of her parents, being obtained by presents. The bridegroom on the day of his marriage gives a grand feast proportionate to his means to his friends, and in return they assist the new-married couple in constructing a house to live in.

At sixteen years of age a youth puts on ivory armlets, or else wooden, or red-coloured cane ones, round his neck. He suspends the couch shells with a black thread, puts brass earrings into his ears, and wears the black kilt; and if a man has killed another in war, he wears three or four rows of cowries round the kilt, and ties up his hair with a cotton band. If a man has killed another in war, he is entitled to wear one feather of the dhune's bird stuck in his hair, and one feather is added for every man he has killed, and these feathers are also fastened to their shields. They also use coloured plaited cane leggings, wear the war sword, spear, shield, and choonga or tube for carrying *panjies*. They also attach to the top of the shield two pieces of wood in the shape of buffalo horns, with locks of hair of human beings

killed in action hanging from the centre. Before they set out on a war expedition, all assemble together and decide on the village to be attacked, and the chief appointed to command the party consults the usual omens, which proving propitious, a fowl is killed and cooked, and all partake of it.

They then provide themselves with spears, shields, and a *panjie choonga,* and cooking two days' food wrap it up in leaves in baskets with some meat, and set out for the village to be attacked, near which they lie in ambush during the night till the break of day, when they rush in upon it with a great noise, and spear the first they meet with, and afterwards cut off the head, hands, and feet, of their enemies, roll them up in a cloth, and return home. They then take the skulls to each house in the village and throw rice and spirits over them, and tell the skulls to call their relatives. The man who has cut off the head keeps it under his bedstead five days: during that time the warriors eat no food prepared by women, and do not cook in their accustomed cooking pot. After the fifth day, however, the heads or skulls are buried, and a great feast is given of pigs and cows, after which they bathe and return to their avocations. They

do not go out singly on inroads, but in bodies. A Nagah can never give up his revenge; he must avenge the death of a relative in some way or other, either by stealth or surprise; kill one or two in return, and carry off their heads, panjying the road after their retreat to prevent their being pursued.

When a respectable man dies in the village, the inhabitants do not quit it for three days, and keep the body in the house, after which they kill cows and pigs, and give a feast of rice and spirits to the whole community. The body is then conveyed to the burying-ground, where it is interred, and a stone tomb is built over the grave, three or four feet high, and all the men, being dressed in their war habiliments, make a great noise, and jump about, and say, "What spirit has come and killed our friend? Where have you fled to? Come, let us see you, how powerful you are. If we could see you, we would spear you and kill you with these spears!" and with similar vociferous speeches and war-whoops, continually repeated, they curse the spirit, and strike the earth with their spears and swords. They then place on the grave all the articles of dress worn by the deceased, as well as his arms, his sword, spear, shields, *panjie* tube,

wearing-apparel, bamboo spirit cup, spirit-gourd bottle, waistband, shells worn round the neck and arms, red cane armlets, cane bands worn on the legs, and coloured cane leggings and dhune's feathers worn in the head. Such is the custom on the death of men; but if a woman dies, her petticoat waistband, cloth tied over the breasts, brass ornaments worn on the arms, and necklaces and spirit-gourd bottle, shuttle for weaving, spinning stick for cotton, cotton thread, dhan, grain, pestle and mortar for cleaning rice, are all placed on her grave. The skulls of pigs and cows are likewise stuck upon sticks at one end of the grave, in memory of the hospitality exercised by the deceased.

If a man falls sick, the chief person in the house or family sacrifices a fowl, and after placing the entrails and feathers in the road in the evening, he calls out to the spirit:—"O spirit! restore to health the person you have afflicted in my family. I offer you the entrails of a fowl." After saying this he returns to his house, and takes the fowl's head and legs, and gives them to some other family; the remainder is then eaten at home. If the sickness is very severe, a person takes a fowl, and goes into the jungle, and leaves the fowl alive as an offering to the living spirit. If it be to the

invisible Hosang spirit, then he kills the fowl and leaves it in the jungle; with the exception of this, they have no other remedies. If a Nagah has cultivated a large extent of land, and falls sick, he kills a pig, and asks the chiefs or elders to partake of his feast, and assist him to cut his grain. The request being acceded to, a feast is given, and the next day they cut the corn.

If a cow or pigs be killed by tigers, or if they die off suddenly, on that day they take an egg and go to the spot on which the cow was killed, and place the egg on the ground, saying, "O spirit! do not, we entreat you, kill our cattle from this day forth. This is not your residence, your abode is in the woods, depart hence from this day." After saying this, they return home; it is a day of rest: and if cattle die suddenly, or if they accidentally wound themselves, that day is also one of rest. In the former case the whole village community remains at home, and in all calamities the usual avocations are not thought of.

A woman may live with a man without being married, and then go to another; but she gives up her progeny, and the children remain with the father. If a Nagah divorces his wife for any fault, shs does not return to her parents, but resides in

a house by herself, and she can marry again. If a man commits adultery his head is cut off. If a thief is caught in the fact, he is killed.

When a man wishes to erect a new house, he first collects all the necessary materials, such as bamboos, grass, and posts, and then fixes on a day, and invites his friends to a feast of fowls, or pigs, and spirituous liquor. The house is forthwith constructed by his friends in a day, and at the close all partake of his hospitality.

When the Angahmees have nothing to do, they sit about on the tombs in groups, and pass the day in drinking spirits and gossipping, and forming plans for hostile inroads on their neighbours.

If any village happens to diminish in number, the larger villages immediately insist on annual tribute being paid to them of cattle, pigs, fowls, dhan, and cloth, or otherwise they plunder it by force, and utterly ruin it.

The Nagahs sink pits in the jungles six or seven feet deep, and fill them with *panjies*, that if any animal should fall into the pit it would be killed. The surface of the pit is covered over with branches and leaves of trees, and the new earth taken out of the pit is conveyed to a distance to prevent wild elephants and buffaloes from smelling that

new ground has been broken, and so avoiding the snare. In January, on the full moon, the wealthy slaughter cows as a sacrifice to the great god, give a grand feast to their friends; entreat the god to protect them and to prosper all their undertakings; and it is a season of general thanksgiving.

Their mode of taking oaths is singular. When they swear to keep the peace, or to perform any promise, they place the barrel of a gun or a spear between their teeth, signifying by this ceremony that, if they do not act up to their agreement, they are prepared to fall by either of the two weapons. Another simple but equally binding oath is, for two parties to take hold of the ends of a piece of spear-iron, and to have it cut into two pieces, leaving a bit in the hand of each party; but the most sacred oath, it is said, is for each party to take a fowl, one by the head and the other by the legs, and in this manner to pull it asunder, intimating that treachery or breach of agreement would merit the same treatment. They likewise erect a large stone as a monument on the occasion of taking an oath, and say that, "as long as this stone stands on the earth, no differences shall occur between us."

Like all wild uncivilized races, the Nagahs are superstitious, and any business or undertakings of importance is decided by consulting omens. To ascertain whether an hostile incursion on a neighbouring tribe would be successful, they cut a soft reed into flat pieces; if the slices fall on one side or one upon the other, success is certain; if on the reverse quarter, or scattered, it is ominous in proportion to the number of pieces that have fallen. They also pretend that they can discover future events by the flight of a cock; if he flies strong and far it is an auspicious omen; on the contrary, should the flight be for a short distance and weakly, ill-luck would inevitably attend any hostile expedition. If a deer likewise crosses their path, when starting on an expedition, they return home immediately, and postpone the undertaking to a future day.

The only weapons used by the Angahmee Nagahs are a spear and dao, a short sword or hand-bill. The spear, in offensive operations, is either thrown or retained in the hand, according to circumstances, in close or distant combat with their enemies. The dao is used chiefly for cutting down jungle, and apparently as a war weapon. They likewise make use of a shield of an oblong shape made of split

bamboo woven together, with sometimes a board behind to prevent its being pierced by a spear.

The incursions of the Angahmee Nagahs are chiefly confined to attacks on small defenceless villages, the inhabitants of which they plunder and carry off into captivity, until their friends effect their ransom by giving cloths, couch shells, beads, pigs, and cows. Amongst the Nagahs it is considered a point of honour to recover the skulls of their friends, who have fallen in an attack made on their villages, and prisoners are always decapitated if they refuse to accompany or return with the victors to their homes.

It is also totally incompatible with Nagah honour to forego taking revenge, and it is incumbent on him to ransom or recover the skull of a relative murdered or captured in war. Years may elapse; but the murder of a relative is never forgotten, and when a favourable opportunity offers, probably twice the number of victims are sacrificed. Retaliation again ensues, and, consequently, there can never be a termination to these exterminating feuds. Exclusively of revenge, however, one of their most barbarous customs is that of cutting off the heads, hands, and feet, of any one they can meet with, without any provocation or præ-existing

enmity, merely to stick them up in their fields, and so ensure a good crop of grain. This practice is very common amongst the adjoining tribe of Lotah Nagahs, and the Angahmee Nagahs are said also to be addicted to it, but not so frequently. The value of slaves and cattle is strangely estimated at the following rate:—A male slave is worth one cow and three couch shells, a female slave is worth three cows and four or five couch shells.

A cow	two couch shells.
A pig	„ „
A goat	„ „
A fowl	one packet of salt.

The price of salt in the plains is 7 rupees per maund of 40 seers or 80 lbs., and a couch shell is worth 1 rupee, so that a male slave is worth 13 rupees or 26 seers; a female slave 34 rupees or 68 seers; a cow 10 rupees or 1*l.*; a goat or pig 2 rupees or 4 seers each.

Weapons, spears, handbills, and hoes, are procured from Muneepoor. The land is roughly cultivated; oftentimes turned up with a crooked stick in lieu of a hoe, for they have no idea of ploughing. The land is cultivated from the base to the summit of the hills in terraces, and irrigated by channels cut from running streams. They grow

rice, pumpkins, gourds, yams, chillies, and ginger. Cotton is not grown in the eastern part of the hills; but a coarse cloth is manufactured from the bark of the stalks of the nettle-plant, and whatever cotton is required for clothing is procured from Sumokhoo-Ting, Rojapo-mah, and Beereh-mah.

CHAPTER X.

Departure from Now-Gong to visit the eastern part of the district—Wild elephants—A night at the village of Lonkhoa Ghat—A fire in the jungle—An unexpected addition to the party—Return to Now-Gong—Another visit to the Hills, and disturbances with the Nagahs.

After a few days' rest at Now-Gong, on the 3rd January I set out on my elephant with my family to visit the Government schools, and institute final inquiries on the eastern part of the division of Now-Gong. All went well with us till we reached Roleabur, where we found it impossible to get the palkee through the reed jungle; a path was thenceforward cut day by day previously to our marching to our grass huts, at every stage. On arriving at Katoree, we found that the namghur, a building for travellers and general assemblies, had been closed in for our reception, as the villagers conceived this would render it more commodious; but a party of elephant-hunters had just caught and tied up nine wild elephants to posts in

front of the namghur. Two were of an immense size, called *mukuas*, or male elephants without tusks. These two monsters were within thirty paces of our door, and their screeching and struggling throughout the night to break from their bonds, rather alarmed us. They seemed perfectly furious; their forelegs were tied to a large post, and their hindlegs were also fastened in a similar manner, with an immense rope or cable strongly secured round the neck, Notwithstanding they were thus fettered, no one dared to approach them; they would have killed any person in an instant by stamping them to death, or throwing them into the air, had any one had the temerity to go near them, unprepared for a rush. The elephant hunters always took the precaution to hold a pointed spear in front, whilst they threw down charra grass, or placed water for their subsistence.

A few days before we arrived, a large elephant had been tied up by the neck to a tree, and becoming mad with rage at the loss of liberty, pulled down the tree, and being entangled was strangled. The body not having been buried, the whole atmosphere round Katoree was scarcely bearable from this putrid mass of flesh; we could not sleep the whole night from the offensive odour, which was

enough to produce a raging pestilence; as, however, we were surrounded by heavy jungle, we could not quit the spot that night, until the road was cut open; but the next morning we started at daybreak, and cut our way as we advanced.

The road was excessively rough, with slight ascents and descents, through forest and grass jungle alternately. Taking the lead on a large elephant in my houdah, with a good battery of guns, about mid-day I was surprised to hear in my rear a general cry of alarm, and hastily retraced my steps to the scene of danger, and then learned that a few minutes after I had passed on with the Coolies who cut down the jungle, a huge Mukna elephant had rushed out of the jungle, and pursued the little baggage elephant, which was in the rear of my wife and child in the palkee. The wild elephant had almost overtaken the little elephant, which, in the utmost fright, screeched, and ran for its life, and passed by my pony, which was led a short distance behind the palkee. Suddenly seeing the pony, the wild elephant turned round and fled to the jungles in the greatest consternation, to the surprise of the whole party, most of whom had begun to climb trees. Elephants are extremely afraid of horses,

and the lives of my family and party owed their safety, on the present occasion, to the fortunate circumstance of my pony having scared off a solitary destructive Mukna elephant.

On the 12th, after travelling 103 miles in ten days, we reached Golaghaut, on the banks of the Dhunseeree river, an outpost established for the residence of a sub-assistant. There are a few merchants' shops, and a considerable trade in grain and other articles is carried on here. Having seen quite enough of the country between Now-Gong and Golaghaut, to feel desirous of avoiding the execrable road and exposure to the sun in passing through some deadly swamps, after a three days' halt at Golaghaut, we succeeded in getting a couple of canoes, and after tying them together with bamboos, and making a platform and roof over the whole, which consisted of two little rooms, we dropped down the Dhunseeree to its junction with the Brahmapootra.

At this point we went on shore to inspect the village of Taragunga, on the eastern side of the Dhunseeree. All the houses were raised on platforms four feet high, to secure them against the inundations, which are very extensive here, and the land must certainly be many feet under water in

the rains. We counted forty houses in the village, and they seemed to have an abundant stock of pigs and fowls. They had likewise some plough-bullocks, which they do not use themselves, but let out to their neighbours on condition of receiving half the produce of the land for their labour. The hoe is the only implement which the people of this village make use of. The inhabitants consisted entirely of Meerees, who, like the Hill tribes, do not drink milk. The whole clan appeared composed of squalid, apparently debilitated, men, a circumstance which probably arose from the low insalubrious site they have selected to reside on. All the Meerees I had hitherto seen were stout, athletic men; but these, probably from taking a large quantity of opium, the curse of the country, coupled with a low, damp residence, have degenerated.

After drifting down the river Brahmapootra for three days, in our *mao* or raft, we reached Lonkhoa Ghat, opposite Tezpore, on the 19th, and taking possession of a few temporary grass huts, erected for our reception close to the village, we imagined we should have passed the night quietly; but at about eight P. M., the villagers commenced using their wooden rattles, by pulling them when suspended in a tree. They are formed of two

bits of bamboo, so fastened that on being pulled they strike together. In addition to this, the noise of hallooing continued at intervals of an hour throughout the night. We got up to inquire the cause of this to us strange pastime at such an hour, and were coolly told it was to keep off the tigers and wild elephants; the former actually killing and dragging off their cows and bullocks from the sheds, if not narrowly watched, and the elephants were so mischievous that no granary would escape destruction, if they were not particularly alert. Our servants declared they heard tigers growling several times, and from constant alarms we scarcely closed our eyes, and rose unrefreshed at six A. M.

We mounted our elephants, and literally waded through the grass jungle fifteen or twenty feet high for about ten miles, without meeting with a vestige of cultivation or a single hut. Before reaching .the Ropohee river our lives were in considerable danger. Some Coolies, who had been sent out to cut down the jungle on the road, set fire to it, as the quickest mode of clearing the country, and we were, in consequence, obliged to beat round it, or rather outflank it, and crossed the Ropohee river with all speed, when we were

no longer in jeopardy. For the last eight miles we passed over a low, level, marshy country, cultivated in some parts, and innumerable villages enlivened our way. We reached Now-Gong at sunset, only to appreciate more fully the comforts of home.

A few days' rest, however, sufficed, when we again set out on the Kullung river to visit the thannahs of Jummoonah Mookh and Jagee, in a mao or raft formed of two canoes tied together, with a platform of bamboos over both canoes, which were also covered in with a bamboo and grass roof, thus forming two snug little rooms. Our progress was slow down the river Kullung and up the Kopeelee; and after twelve days' tedious travelling, propelling our raft with poles, and dragging it with a rope, when opposite Degul-duree, on the night of the 14th March, we were unexpectedly surprised by the birth of our second son, James. Fortunately we were only a few miles from Now-Gong, and reached our home the same day, truly happy at the event, and prepared to enjoy and make the most of our lot. I was, however, allowed to remain quiet only a few months, for, on the 30th November, 1846, I was again deputed to visit the Angahmee Nagah hills;

and as I travelled over nearly the same ground, a repetition of the fatigues and incidents of the same kind of tour is unnecessary, and I need only allude to one circumstance.

Being ordered to take only a small and select body of troops into the interior of the hills, contrary to my own judgment, the Nagahs at Mozo-mah despised so small a force, and imagined they could contend against it, and accordingly leagued together, and for two days our little party was in imminent danger. One day, at about one P. M., I was surprised to see a large party with shields and spears, screeching, yelling, and jumping about in the most fantastical manner, coming down the Mozo-mah hill in regular battle array towards my camp. We immediately got under arms, and warned the Nagahs not to approach us in this hostile manner. Our position being very strong, a stream, with perpendicular banks on one flank, and high, inaccessible hills on the other, leaving our front only open to attack, the Nagahs seemed puzzled what to do. They advanced, then halted, sat down in groups, quarrelled with each other, and at last, as they saw our glittering bayonets in line, ready to receive them—and that, though we were but a small body

of men, we were not intimidated by their war-whoop, or numbers—they suddenly lost courage and retreated. Within a couple of hours afterwards, the principal chiefs of some of the largest villages, Joshe-mah and Gohee-mah, who had not formerly submitted, came into camp, putting aside their spears and shields, and thus a complete victory was gained over a set of savages, without firing a single shot, by simply not submitting to be intimidated, but keeping a bold and determined front.

It was the first time they had ever appeared in the presence of a European, and they seemed very uneasy, and looked round in every direction, as if they meditated immediate flight. As they were treated civilly, their fears gradually abated, and they left us, highly pleased with their reception, after having sworn, with all solemnity and Nagah forms, allegiance to the British Government.

Owing to great fatigue and exposure for the last three nights and days, in bringing matters thus to a peaceable conclusion, I now, unfortunately, fell sick with fever, and was compelled to return to Now-Gong on the 17th January, 1847. But before I left the hills, a military post was established in the village of Sumokhoo-Ting, as

it was evident that annual military trips alone, unaided by a permanently located police in the hills, would never attain the object of subduing these lawless clans. In February a police thannah and school was also established in the village, as, until principles of right conduct are instilled into the minds of the Nagahs, it is in vain to hope or expect any amelioration of their condition, or that their feelings or customs will be changed.

A murder having been committed at Mozo-mah in February, 1847, the Darogah Bhog Chund at Sumokhoo-Ting was directed to proceed to the village, and inquire into the cause of the aggression. On the 8th March the Darogah set out with twenty Sipahees from Sumokhoo-Ting, and arrived at Mozo-mah on the 10th. Here he learned that the Nagahs of Lakeh-mah had, without any provocation whatever, killed a Nagah of Mozo-mah, and that, according to their barbarous custom, they had cut off and carried away his head, hands, and feet. On the 13th he advanced to the village of Meerna, after leaving three malingering Sipahees behind at Mozo-mah. He had scarcely taken up his quarters at Meeree-mah, when a party of 200 Nagahs from Lakeh-mah suddenly made their appearance, and by taking up a position in am-

bush on the Joshe-mah road, completely cut off their retreat. The 14th was passed in abortive attempts by messages to bring the Nagahs of Lakeh-mah to terms, who had assembled 1,200 warriors for the occasion in the vicinity of the village of Meeree-mah, evidently intent on annihilating the party lodged in the village. On the 15th, Bhog Chund ventured to visit the village of Kegue-mah. In returning, one Coolie was slightly wounded in the face with a spear, by the Lakeh-mah Nagahs, and they had the temerity, likewise, to take by surprise one of the Coolies of Joshe-mah, who was returning from Meeree-mah, and whom they instantly tied up to a tree; they then amused themselves with the diversion of target practice, by throwing their spears at this unfortunate man. After this, each Nagah cut off a bit of the victim's flesh, and held it up to the view of Bhog Chund and party, telling them they would cut off their heads and distribute their flesh among themselves in the same manner as they had done to the Coolie who had accompanied him from Joshe-mah.

The 16th and 17th were passed in useless conciliatory messages to the enemy. On the 18th, as the Lakeh-mah Nagahs had declined to receive any further communications, but had sworn to kill

Bhog Chund and party, and had thrown up breastworks in every quarter to obstruct his return—while the Sipahees had been on short rations for the last five days, and further delay seemed only to increase the arrogance and confidence of the enemy—Bhog Chund at last courageously resolved on facing the dangers with which he was beset, and accordingly marched out of the friendly village of Meeree-mah. He had scarcely proceeded a mile, when the war yells of 1,600 Nagah warriors resounded in his ears, who were lying in ambush in every direction, behind breastworks of planks and walls. At this critical moment, seven out of seventeen of the Shan, Assamese, and Cacharee Sipahees, composing the Now-Gong Police Militia, panic-struck by the war yells of the Nagahs, fled to the jungles in the rear, leaving only ten Sipahees, with Bhog Chund, to fight the battle in the best way they could. Nothing daunted by this untoward event, when the Nagahs were closing round the little band, and from a distance throwing their spears at them, a Lance Naick, of the name of Ahena, instantly stepped out and boldly challenged his companions to follow him and force their way through the enemy, or they would be flayed alive. His advice was fortunately heeded, and being

supported by the cool decision of Bhog Chund, volleys of musketry were repeatedly fired, and the breastworks were rapidly taken at the point of the bayonet. The Nagahs were astounded at perceiving that their wooden shields were no protection against leaden balls, and hastily carrying off their killed and wounded, whom later reports proved to have been numerous, fled from the field of battle. The victorious party returned to the friendly village of Meeree-mah, and leisurely went back to Sumokhoo-Ting on the 21st without further opposition, and the greatest respect was manifested towards them by the weaker clans, for having humbled one of the most tyrannical tribes in the country.

Such is always the conduct of savages—they can never be trusted; and if an inefficient or small force is sent against them, it is ten chances to one but that it is either attacked in the day, or surprised at night. Greater boldness and presumption are always sure to be manifested by savages when their aggressions pass with impunity, or their acts of violence are not instantly chastised. On such occasions procrastination or forbearance is construed into fear, and they are emboldened to commit the most fearful atrocities. The bravery

of the Sipahees, to the credit of the Government, was rewarded by their immediate promotion to the grade of Havildars, and Bhog Chund was exalted to the dignity of a second class Darogah, which his distinguished service merited.

CHAPTER XI.

The Angahmee Nagah rebellion—Eighth and ninth military expeditions in 1849 and 1850.

During the year 1848, a thousand Angahmee Nagahs visited the station of Now-Gong, to trade with the merchants in salt and cornelian beads, which they greatly prize, and the utmost goodwill was manifested towards the authorities and the people of the plains. Early in 1849, however, the Angahmee Nagah chiefs evinced a turbulent disposition amongst themselves; and the two chiefs of the village of Mozo-mah, Jubelee and Milholey, had an unfortunate dispute about some land. Jubelee applied for a guard of Sipahees to be placed in his village; and both chiefs waited on the agent to the Governor-General at Gowahattee, and returned to the hills, as we thought, quite satisfied with the prospect of a guard being placed in their village either before or after the rains.

In May, 1849, however, Bhog Chund Darogah found the season so far advanced, that he could not obtain any assistance from the Nagahs to construct a stockade, and, on that account, was directed to postpone the measure till after the rains, when, in November, the principal assistant would proceed to Mozo-mah, and select a good site for a stockade, distinct from the village of Mozo-mah.

In July, however, a noted freebooter, Hurry Das Kachary, employed as a Darogah by the Muneepoor Government, wrote a letter from Beremah to Bhog Chund Darogah, at Sumokhoo-Ting, asking him to meet him to settle a case of murder that had been committed by the Nagahs of Konomah. With the concurrence of the agent to the Governor-General, he was directed to meet him as soon as possible at Beereh-mah; in the mean time, however, Bhog Chund Darogah heard that Jubelee had called in a party of Tooleeram Senahputtee's Cacharees, armed with seven muskets, to fight against Milholey; and conceiving that it was necessary at once to interfere and prevent bloodshed, he set out from Sumokhoo-Ting without any orders on the 17th July, 1849, accompanied by one Havildar, one Naick, one Lance Naick, and

thirty Sipahees of the Now-Gong Police Militia, and a few armed Ticklahs. He arrived at Mozomah on the 19th July, where he was well received by both chiefs, and he induced them to construct a stockade in the middle of the village, separating the two clans now at enmity with each other.

After staying five days at Mozo-mah, Bhog Chund visited other large villages in the neighbourhood, and was treated in the most friendly manner; he then returned to Mozo-mah, and apprehended seven Cacharees armed with muskets, who resided with Jubelee, and demanded of Milholey the surrender of the person who had killed a man of Jubelee's clan. Milholey was indignant at the request, and replied that he could not submit to such a dishonourable act, and entreated him not to attempt to apprehend any persons of his clan, but to bind him and Jubelee and take them both to the Principal Assistant at Now Gong, and he would cheerfully abide by his decision and settlement of the question.

Strange and unaccountable as it may seem, this reasonable request was utterly scorned by Bhog Chund, and instantly, in spite of all entreaty and warning, he apprehended two men of Milholey's clan. This conduct so exasperated Milholey, that

he and his clan immediately left the village of Mozo-mah, which was tantamount to a declaration of war; but Bhog Chund seemed perfectly reckless and fearless of all threats, and continued in the village of Mozo-mah three days.

On the 2nd August, after leaving three Ticklahs armed with muskets, to take charge of the newly-built stockade at Mozo-mah, he set out for Sumokhoo-Ting. On the line of march no opposition was offered to his party, but on approaching the village of Pripheh-mah, one of the Nagah prisoners effected his escape from the guard, by jumping down a precipice, and was not seen afterwards. This circumstance, it is said, caused Bhog Chund great annoyance, and he became reckless and desperate, and bade the Nagahs defiance. Though warned by Nagah women and Jubelee that he would certainly be attacked by Milholey that night, if he was not very watchful, he heeded no warnings, and did not apparently take any precautions to guard against a surprise. No sentries were placed outside the huts, and it is evident the enemy were held in the utmost contempt. The party located themselves in the village of Pripheh-mah, in three separate houses; twenty Sipahees, with a Nagah prisoner, in one house;

Bhog Chand, with the Ticklahs and ten Sipahees in another house; and the seven disarmed Cacharees in a separate house by themselves, whilst the Coolies lay down close by without cover.

At break of day, on the 3rd August, Nilholey and his clan surrounded the houses occupied by Bhog Chand and party, and with their usual war-yells commenced the attack by flinging stones, and throwing spears at the huts. Bhog Chand entreated the Sipahees to come out and beat off the enemy; but, excepting two or three Nepalese and Shan Sipahees, the remainder of the guard could not be prevailed on to quit the huts and fire in a body on the enemy. This feeble defence emboldened the Nagahs to set fire to the huts, and the ejection of the whole party followed in a few minutes; but, unfortunately, at this moment Bhog Chand, with the Shan Havildar and two or three Sipahees, proceeded to the edge of the hill, where Nilholey was lying in wait for him, concealed behind a high stone. From his ambush Nilholey threw his spear, which passed through the neck and came out between the shoulder-blade, and Bhog Chand fell dead on the spot. The Shan Havildar was likewise speared through the body, and several Sipahees shared the same fate. The

death of the Havildar and Bhog Chand so dispirited the men that they were panic-stricken and immediately fled, leaving the killed and wounded, with all their baggage, and several muskets, ammunition, and accoutrements; and they never stopped till they reached Sumokhoo-Ting the same day about nine P. M.

The enemy had three or four killed; and it appears they were either alarmed, or satisfied with what they had done, for, on the death of the Havildar and Bhog Chand, they returned to Mozo-mah with all haste; clearly showing there was no necessity for the rapid flight of the Sipahees from the scene of this disaster. On this eventful morning our loss in killed was one Darogah, one Havildar, four Sipahees, and eight Coolies; and the wounded amounted to one Naick, three Sipahees, and four Coolies; in all, the killed and wounded amounted to twenty-two men. It is wonderful that a single man was allowed to escape, so little courage was shown by the troops on this occasion.

On Nilholey's return with the clan to Mozo-mah, he was opposed by Jubelee's clan; who, true in their allegiance to the British Government, would not permit the three Ticklahs left in the stockade by

Bhog Chand: viz., Bodhoo, Pook, and Run Sing, to be given up to the enemy; they not only fed them, but maintained open war, until the ensuing cold season, in November, when they all managed to return in safety to Dheemahpoor. Nilholey's party meanwhile commenced to construct a fort on a high ridge of the mountains above the village of Kono-mah, to protect themselves against the vengeance which they knew awaited them, as soon as our troops could visit the hills.

On the 20th November, 1849, Lieutenant Vincent, junior assistant-commissioner, was deputed to conduct, in the political department, the eighth expedition to the Angahmee Nagah hills, and Lieutenant Campbell, second in command of the 2nd Assam Light Infantry, commanded the party, which consisted of one Loobadar, one Jemadar, seven Havildars, seven Naicks, one Bugler, and 130 Sipahees. After passing nearly a month at Dheemahpoor in endeavouring to collect Coolies, and in making arrangements for provisions, the force, divided into small parties, reached Mozo-mah by the latter end of December. On the approach of our troops, Nilholey and his clan fired a few shots, and retired to their fastness in the mountains.

In the beginning of January, 1850, Lieu-

tenant Vincent, with a small party of one Havildar, twelve Sipahees, and fifty Nagah warriors, proceeded to Beereh-mah to have a consultation with the political agent of Muneepoor; leaving Lieutenant Campbell at Mozo-mah to build a stockade there in the middle of the village, as a permanent station for our troops. At that time neither of these officers seemed to be aware of Nilholey's having constructed a strong fort in their neighbourhood; it was discovered accidentally, on the 14th January. Lieutenant Campbell, when out foraging in the jungles to discover concealed rice, with only a guard of eighteen men, suddenly fell in with the enemy, and followed him to his fort; this he soon found was not to be captured by his small force, and he therefore prudently effected an orderly retreat to his own camp in the village of Mozo-mah. Two days afterwards, he deputed a native officer with sixty-two men to take the fort, but after a day's useless exertion, and firing 500 rounds of ammunition, the party retired unsuccessful in the evening to Mozo-mah. Notwithstanding this attempt to capture the fort had failed, Lieutenant Campbell did not make any other attempt to take the place; but, in the latter end of January, leaving half his force, about sixty men, at Mo-

zo-mah, he proceeded with the remainder to visit the large village of Josheh-mah.

In his absence, a little before break of day on the 26th January, the enemy burned down the whole village of Mozo-mah. Lieutenant Campbell seeing the fire from Josheh-mah, proceeded forthwith to Mozo-mah, where he found that he had lost all his provisions. Nagah promises of assistance, in supplying him with rice, he knew were not to be relied on, and, in consequence, he immediately retired through the passes, before they were occupied by the enemy, with the whole of his force to Dheemahpoor, which place he reached unmolested on the evening of the 28th January. Lieutenant Vincent also arrived there on the same day, escorted by a party of Muneepoor Sipahees from Beereh-mah to Dheemahpoor.

I had arrived a few days previously at Dheemahpoor, and, in this state of affairs, finding there were no provisions in store, but only sufficient to supply the troops for a short time, the posts of Sumokhoo-Ting, Dheemahpoor, and Mohung Dehooa, were strengthened, and the officers and men returned to Now-Gong; for at that late season of the year there were many difficulties to be overcome, rendering a second expedition extremely hazardous.

Neither Coolies nor food could have been collected for such an undertaking, under many days; and, moreover, Lieutenant Campbell having informed me that 200 men with guns would be necessary to capture so strong a fort as the enemy had constructed, there was no other safe alternative but to pursue a defensive policy, till the ensuing cold season; for we had no guns at hand, and a second failure was on every ground to be avoided. The mere reinstating of Jubelee's clan in the village of Mozo-mah, though quite practicable, was of secondary importance to that of taking the fort, which could not be accomplished without guns, and a large reinforcement of troops.

This policy, however, was not approved by the Agent to the Governor-General, as the frontier boats did not prevent the Nagahs from committing murderous inroads on our villages in the plains. Two traders had been murdered near Mohung Dehooa on the 5th December, 1849, and twenty-three Meekirs had been cut up at Deelao on the 8th January; and at Loongee-jair, near Mohung Dehooa, eighteen Cacharees had been slaughtered on the 18th February. To check these inroads, it was thought expedient to divert the Nagahs by sending a detachment again into the Hills, and to assist Povit-

soh in recovering his lost village. Lieutenant Vincent accordingly set out from Now-Gong, on the 18th February, to carry out the ninth expedition. He reached Dheemahpoor on the 27th February, and on the 2nd March, having taken ten Nepalese Sipahees volunteers from the 1st Assam Light Infantry, one Havildar, one Naick, and twenty Sipahees of the Now-Gong police, he set out for Mozo-mah with Povitsoh and his clan, who amounted, including men, women, and children, to 300 persons.

On the 6th March, the whole party reached Mozo-mah without a single accident, and without any Coolies to carry the baggage. Nilholey's clan, or rather a picket of twenty men, on the arrival of our troops at Mozo-mah, gave their usual war-whoop and fled to Kono-mah, hotly pursued by our troops; a portion of the village of Kono-mah inimical to us, and belonging to Pelhoo's clan, was instantly burned to the ground; but that in alliance with us was spared. In this manner the friendly Nagahs of Mozo-mah were reinstated in their village, which had been burned down by Nilholey in January. The consequent loss of provisions, had rendered it necessary for a large detachment, under Lieutenant Campbell,

to retire to Dheemahpoor. Lieutenant Vincent's speedy return to Mozo-mah greatly astonished the enemy; but, in a few days, the former evidently perceived the perilous position in which he was placed. Before leaving Now-Gong he had imagined that thirty men were sufficient to capture Mozo-mah, and to maintain it: no one doubted but that thirty Sipahees could surprise Mozo-mah; but the attempt to secure it throughout the year, surrounded by numerous turbulent, treacherous, savage tribes, all acquainted with the country and people, was a perfect delusion.

Oblivious of past declarations, on the 13th March, Lieutenant Vincent called for a reinforcement of fifty men of the 1st Assam Light Infantry, to take the duties of the post at Dheemahpoor, in the room of troops withdrawn from thence for service in the Hills. By the latter end of March Lieutenant Vincent had assembled about 100 men at Mozo-mah. On the 4th April with a select party, after travelling all night, he surprised the village of Jaquee-mah, composed of about 300 houses, and burned it to the ground, because the inhabitants were in alliance with the enemy. A party of Mozo-mah Nagahs, our allies, accompanied Lieutenant Vincent on this night expedition; and

it is to be regretted, that, in the pursuit of the enemy, six persons were killed: two women amongst the number. As this village had not openly opposed Lieutenant Vincent, and almost every village in the country had similarly assisted the enemy with food and shelter, its total destruction by fire seems a harsh, vindictive measure, calculated to exasperate, and even to make them implacable enemies.

On the 16th April, Lieutenant Vincent reported that the stockade of Mozo-mah was nearly completed, and provisions sufficient for thirty-five men would be in store in a few days, when he should be ready to return to Now-Gong with the remainder of the troops; but, before he took such a step, he begged to offer his services to remain at Mozo-mah throughout the rains, as the Nagahs would then see that we could subsist in their hills for any length of time, during the hot as well as the cold season. As Nilholey, however, was so strongly intrenched in his fort beyond Kono-mah, he did not deem it prudent to attack him; but the policy he was pursuing, of keeping him out of his fields and village, would in the end oblige him to surrender, he felt convinced, before the close of the rains. The Agent to

the Governor-General acceded to this proposition, and directed Lieutenant Vincent to remain at Mozo-mah, throughout the rains, with an efficient force. During the month of April, Lieutenant Vincent saw clearly that his post of 100 men at Mozo-mah but little impeded the movements or resources of the enemy, for they readily obtained all their supplies from Kono-mah and other villages. To prevent the enemy, therefore, from having access to the village of Kono-mah, or their fields, at the request of a clan of that village, he located a guard of two Jemadars, one Havildar, two Naicks, and forty-one Sipahees, at Kono-mah, on the 26th April, in a stockade. This measure, he said, would completely prevent access to their village or fields; and, as he was credibly informed the enemy were confined to their fort without any great store of provision, it would be impossible they could remain for any length of time, but must be speedily compelled to surrender. Notwithstanding this reasoning, the Agent to the Governor-General did not approve of the establishment of a post at Kono-mah; and he directed that it should be withdrawn, if Mozo-mah, Sumokhoo-Ting, or Dheemah-poor, should be in any danger.

On the 8th May, three Sipahees left the stockade

of Kono-mah to procure water from a spring close by, taking with them two muskets. Whilst thus engaged, two Nagahs suddenly appeared on the hill above them, at some distance. Upon this, one of the Sipahees fired, but without effect; immediately a number of Nagahs sprang out from the jungle close to the Sipahees. Munsoobaroe at once tried to fire his musket, but it missed fire three times; and seeing there was no chance of escape from so many Nagahs, the three Sipahees fled with all speed towards their stockade. Munsoobaroe, however, in his flight, having fallen into a deep Nullah, was quickly overtaken by the Nagahs and speared to death, his musket being carried off in triumph. The other two Sipahees, though hotly pursued, reached the stockade in safety; a party of Sipahees, on hearing a shot fired, had come out of the stockade to meet them, or they also, probably, would have shared the same fate as their comrade Munsoobaroe. The Sipahees had been frequently warned not to go from the stockade for water, except in large bodies, and with loaded muskets; but as this had not been attended to, Lieutenant Vincent now gave the Jemadar commanding the stockade at Kono-mah, written orders on no account to permit a

smaller party than twenty Sipahees, under a non-commissioned officer, with at least ten muskets, to go at any time for water. A stronger proof than this of the folly of locating thirty-five men in a stockade in these hills could not be adduced. Such was the war in which we were now engaged. The Sipahees could not, either at Mozo-mah or Kono-mah, leave their stockade for a drop of water, except in a body of twenty men with loaded muskets; and frequent attempts at night were made by the enemy to surprise the stockades.

On the 23rd May, Lieutenant Vincent determined to reconnoitre the enemies' fort at Kono-mah carefully and minutely, and to surprise them, if possible, while engaged in cultivating their land. On approaching the fort, he was assailed with stones, and fired at; he returned the fire, and being satisfied, from a close inspection, that the right of the enemy's position could not be taken without the assistance of a gun, he withdrew his party; having one Sipahee slightly wounded with a slug, and two or three others *panjied*. The attempt to surprise the enemy cultivating, previously to reconnoitring the stockade, failed, owing to the enemy not having been at their usual occupation that day, but out hunting and bathing in the river.

About the 27th July, Lieutenant Vincent succeeded in effecting, for thirty-seven rupees, the ransom of Tooleeram, a Cacharee boy, who had been carried off from the village of Loongee-jair on the 18th February, by a marauding party of Angahmee Nagahs. Two other children were at the same time carried off, but had been sold to different villages; a little girl was sold to some Nagahs at Beereh-mah, but could not be traced. The fate of the third boy was horrible; he was purchased by the adjoining tribe of Lotah Nagahs, and a man of the village having died immediately after the purchase, it was considered a bad omen, and that ill luck had befallen them on account of this captive child. They therefore flayed the poor boy alive, cutting off his flesh bit by bit until he died. These cruel and superstitious savages then divided the body, giving a piece of the flesh to each man in the village to put into his *dolu*, a large corn basket. By this they suppose all evil will be averted, their good fortune will return, and plentiful crops of grain will be ensured.

The experience of six months' residence in the hills had now conduced to change entirely the views of Lieutenant Vincent, in regard to the feasibility of either maintaining a small post in

hills, or subduing the tribes with thirty muskets; which in February he had deemed practicable.

On the 26th August he reported that Andaroo Sipahee, when only forty-two paces from the stockade at Kono-mah, was suddenly speared to death by two of the enemy secreted behind a stone. This act of treachery, coupled with the suspicion entertained that the professed friendly Nagahs of Kono-mah were not so faithful as they ought to be, induced him to withdraw the guard at once from Kono-mah on the following day. The store of rice and the Sipahees' baggage were first removed from Kono-mah to Mozo-mah, and then all the houses of those Nagahs residing in Kono-mah who were not sworn to go to Mozo-mah, were burned down. The Sipahees' huts were also destroyed by fire, and the whole of the troops quitted Kono-mah by 5 P.M. on the 24th August.

Lieutenant Vincent remarked on this occasion, "I do not consider my position at Mozo-mah, even with an increased force, though perfectly tenable, so safe as it was when I had an advanced picket at Kono-mah; and nothing should have induced me to withdraw it, had I not been convinced of treachery from within; for though our troops can withstand,

and have successfully withstood, repeated attempts at surprise and attack, both on their way to and from water, and at night in the stockade, still it is impossible to expect them to be prepared against treachery at their very threshold."

CHAPTER XII.

The tenth military expedition—Final result.

It was now evident that the guard stationed at Kono-mah from the 26th April to the 24th August had not been efficient in preventing the enemy from procuring provisions from all quarters; and the Nagahs had thus been enabled successfully to oppose a large detachment from March till the latter date. Lieutenant Vincent could only depend upon the 160 warriors of Jubelee's clan, reinstated in the village of Mozo-mah, in March. The burning of Jaquee-mah and part of Kono-mah did not further his object, nor lead to the capture of the fort or the submission of the enemy. On the contrary, Lieutenant Vincent acknowledged that the last daring act, the treacherous murder of Andaroo Sipahee, showed clearly that the animosity of the enemy was unabated; and he was of opinion that they had no intention whatever of surrendering, for

D K del.

Fort of hostile clan Konomah Muzemah.

Ford & West Lith.rs.

Nilholey was daily extending his fort, and there was no hope or possibility of his being driven from it except by a gun or mortar, and being buoyed up by the assistance they had received from other villages in food and shelter for themselves and families, all efforts to induce their submission had proved fruitless.

This result was what many experienced officers expected before the ninth expedition set out in February from Now-Gong. Thirty Sipahees only were solicited by Lieutenant Vincent for this expedition, but with 100 men he was unable to do more than to maintain his post; and that he did it so successfully great credit is due to him, for he had many difficulties to contend against: he is not to blame for having been deputed, or rather for having volunteered to return to the hills, and attempting to bring about what was considered highly hazardous and impracticable, namely, the capture of the fort of Kono-mah, or the surrender of Nilholey and his clan.

It has, however, been urged that, by Lieutenant Vincent's return to the hills, all further inroads on our villages were prevented. It is true, no aggressions occurred after his return to the hills in March, but if he had not returned, it is very

doubtful whether any further inroads would have been attempted, as the season was far advanced, and the Nagahs at that season are generally busily occupied in cultivating their land. The expedition, therefore, may be deemed uncalled for, and it put the Government to an enormous expense: the friendly clan of Mozo-mah might have been reinstated in the ensuing cold season, and the troops would have been saved much harassing service and many privations, which they had to endure in an eight months' siege from March till October.

In this state of affairs, and seeing there was not the slightest chance or hope of getting the better of the enemy, on the 26th August, Lieutenant Vincent wrote "I strongly recommend, therefore, that a force of not less than four or five hundred bayonets, accompanied by a gun, should enter these hills as soon as the season will allow, in order that this hitherto successful rebellion may at once be brought to an issue; I would also recommend that the assistance of the Muneepoor government should be obtained in crushing this hydra-headed rebellion."

The failure of the eighth, and the severity of the ninth expedition, greatly exasperated the Nagahs, for previously to the last expedition, there were only 160 warriors of Nilholey's clan, and 200 warriors

of a portion of Kono-mah, openly opposed to us; but in August, 1850, Lieutenant Vincent reports that the strength of the clans who were opposed to us in the attack on Kono-mah, might be calculated as follows:—

	Warriors.
Mozo-mah, Chief Nilholey . . .	160
Konomah, Chief Pelhoo . . .	200
Cheereh-mah	200
Joshe-mah	300
	860

"In addition to the above, the following villages are known to be hostile to us, and many others are secretly opposed to us, who inhabit every village throughout the hills:—

Villages.	Houses.
Geeroo-mah	100
Tijapa-mah	60
Beephoo-mah	40
Pherkekre-mah	50
Tesheh-mah	700
Kede-mah	300
Kekre-mah.	1,000
Carried forward . . .	2,250

Total houses brought forward	2,250
Warriors per house	2
	4,500
Additional warriors in 1st list	860
Total number of warriors .	5,360

So that there was, by this list, not less than 5,360 warriors arrayed against us.

Lieutenant Vincent says, "I have thought it necessary to enter at some length into the present posture of affairs, as it is my opinion that, unless an overwhelming force is sent into these hills in the ensuing cold season, nothing permanent will be effected." Hitherto the Agent to the Governor-General, and the Government, imagined that Lieutenant Vincent had been most successful, and that the Nagahs were on the point of submitting to our authority. This startling report, however, clearly showed the true state of affairs. The Agent to the Governor-General could no longer conceal his disappointment, and expressed his opinion that he had anticipated a different result. He acknowledged he was not prepared to see so large a force required at Mozo-mah, or to find Nilholey making so determined a resistance. The

Government was also surprised, and expressed its displeasure. The delusion was at an end: Government immediately sanctioned the assembling a large force of 500 men, under Major Foquett, commanding the 2nd Assam Light Infantry, with two three-pounder guns, and two mortars, to enter the country as soon as possible, for the purpose of relieving Lieutenant Vincent, and capturing the fort of Kono-mah.

On the 24th September, the Agent to the Governor-General warned me to prepare to conduct, in the political department, the tenth expedition to the Angahmee Nagah Hills; but before I set out from Now-Gong, orders were received from Government, that in the present state of affairs it was necessary that the Agent to the Governor-General should himself proceed to the frontier, and, in some convenient position, personally conduct the expedition. The Agent to the Governor-General accordingly reached Dheemahpoor about the 18th of December, and remained there till the 29th December. This order gave universal satisfaction, as for ten years past officers and troops had been harassed with annual useless expeditions to these hills. Captain Reed of the Artillery, and Lieutenant Bivar of the Light Infantry, with a

detachment of Light Infantry, and two three-pounder guns, proceeded to Mozo-mah in November; and in December, having collected 600 Coolies, and despatched rice for the troops to Mozo-mah, I accompanied Major Foquett with a detachment and two mortars, in progress to Mozo-mah, which place we reached on the 7th December, after a harassing march of forty miles from Dheemahpoor, greatly impeded by difficulties we experienced in getting the mortars conveyed over the hills.

About eight o'clock on the morning of the 10th December, 1850, the party enumerated below,* with two three-pounder guns, and two four-inch mortars, left Mozo-mah to capture the fort of Kono-mah. At two P. M. the mortars commenced firing shells on the fort, at a distance of 600 yards, but owing to a dense fog, and the narrow ridge of the mountains on which the enemy's position was situated, the shells seemed to have little effect, falling either short of, or beyond, the position. The two three-pounder guns were then advanced within 150 yards of the fort, to effect a breach in the barricade for the troops to enter, but the

* One Major, one Captain, three Lieutenants, one Assistant-Surgeon, one Sergeant, three Subadars, three Jemadars, seventeen Havildars, twenty Naicks, three Buglers, 281 Sipahees; total, 354.

defences being very strongly constructed of stone and timber, and not being injured after many rounds of shot and canister had been expended, the guns were advanced to within seventy yards. Still, as there appeared no hope of breaching the barricade, and the day was closing, the whole party advanced to escalade the position. On reaching the defences, a deep and wide trench stopped all further progress; and as it was flanked at each end by an abrupt precipice, and exposed to showers of spears, musketry, and stones, the troops were obliged to retire to the spot where the guns first opened fire, and there bivouacked for the night. It was extremely cold, and as they were without food, water, or shelter, the sufferings of all were very great. To prevent a surprise, a desultory fire was kept up during the night on the enemy's position; and on the morning of the 11th, when the party rose to resume hostilities, the friendly Nagahs reported that the enemy had evacuated the fort, and our troops immediately took possession of it.

Thus fell one of the strongest forts ever seen in Assam, after a siege of sixteen hours' duration. Our loss in wounded on this occasion consisted of two Havildars, three Naicks, one Bugler, and

twenty-five Sipahees, and three Sipahees were killed. The mountains were covered with snow on the 12th, and the cold was extreme, so much so, that it was with difficulty the Sipahees could be prevented from leaving the fort, whilst it was being dismantled: indeed many did go down to the valley below the fort, and were compelled to return. After the capture of the fort, I wrote to the Agent to the Governor-General as follows, on the 17th December:—

"The experience of this expedition has shown very clearly the great difficulties that have to be encountered in carrying on warfare in this woody and mountainous country. Unable to move with less than 600 Coolies, if opposed, we should suffer serious loss without the possibility of being able to injure the enemy. I have used every means, therefore, to conciliate the Nagahs of those villages said to be friendly to us, and in return they have supplied us with rice, and assured me of their desire to be on friendly terms with us. At present I see no prospect of apprehending Nilholey, or his followers; and if they receive encouragement or assistance from the Muneepoor government, the contest may be prolonged for an indefinite period. The Government having decided on not resuming

Tooleeram's country, we are deprived of all assistance from his people, and our own population of Meekirs being very scanty, we shall be unable to continue to employ them in conducting expeditions into the Angahmee Nagah hills; for, rather than submit to this service, I am persuaded they will leave the district, or be utterly ruined from not being able to attend to their cultivation.

"In the present state of affairs I do not recommend violent measures, unless we are openly opposed. We have driven the enemy from his stronghold, and he must now be sensible of our power; and it is a question to be considered, whether it would not be more advisable not to interfere with the internal affairs of the Nagahs, but to supply them freely with salt at Dheemahpoor, and to maintain posts of the police, militia, and light infantry, at Dheemahpoor and Mohung Dehooa, for the protection of our frontier.

"If we establish a military post permanently in the Hills, a European officer with civil power as superintendent of the Nagah hills, on a salary of 1,000 rupees will be, I conceive, indispensable, and not less than 150 men would be safely left at Mozo-mah, besides a large detachment, as a support, at Dheemahpoor.

"By a defensive or offensive policy our frontier is equally exposed to sudden inroads; but to distinguish the guilty from the innocent is exceedingly difficult, and an indiscriminate destruction of Nagah villages cannot be contemplated—especially if we decide on retaining possession of the country—as we should, by such a proceeding, destroy our resources, and have no claim on the Nagahs to supply us with rice, but probably exasperate them to the commission of the most daring acts of atrocity and opposition to our measures."

In company with Major Foquett, I returned on the 25th December, from Mozo-mah to Dheemahpoor, when I was called on by the Agent to the Governor-General to give an opinion as to what measures were advisable to adopt in our future intercourse with the Angahmee Nagahs, and the following suggestions were offered:—

"After mature consideration, it appears to me that our endeavours for some years past to put down the internal feuds of the Nagah communities have proved a complete failure. I, therefore, beg leave to suggest that, for the future, we leave the Nagahs entirely to themselves, and wholly abstain from any interference with them. The guard posted at Mozo-mah in March last,

I would withdraw, as soon as the wounded men can be removed with the mortars and guns. By this step, I am aware, the Mozo-mah clan will be exposed to the vengeance of the enemy. We are, however, not called on to support them or any other small clan, or there would be no end to such a system: we ought not to side with any party. The Nagahs of Mozo-mah, about 160 warriors, have been reinstated in their village, and the fortified post of the enemy at Kono-mah having been effectually destroyed, we can now withdraw our forces without its being mistaken for weakness.

"The Mozo-mah clan have no claim on us for special protection; they called in Cacharees with muskets to fight against Nilholey, and the late Darogah Bhog-Chund, having taken their part, lost his life. There are many smaller villages than Mozo-mah which protect themselves, and, as you gave them muskets in February last, they are better off than many of their neighbours who are unprovided with fire-arms.

"It would be unsafe to leave a smaller detachment at Mozo-mah, than 150 men with a European officer invested with civil and military powers; and after past experience of all the difficulties to be

surmounted, such a measure does not appear advisable: more particularly so, as the guard at Sumokhoo-Ting has, through the treachery of the Nagahs, been obliged to be withdrawn.

"To bring the Nagahs into complete subjection by permanently occupying the country, would, as I have before reported, involve the employment of at least a regiment of 500 men, with several European officers, guns, and mortars; and the enormous expense attendant on such a measure, besides the absolute necessity that would then follow of constructing roads throughout the country to facilitate military movements, leaves us no alternative but to adopt a strictly defensive policy for the future."

The campaign being now, as we supposed, closed, Major Foquett reduced the force in the hills, and made over the command to Captain Reed, at Mozo-mah, to wait there till the final orders of Government were received as to the future management of the Angahmee Nagahs. Captain Reed reported on the 11th January, that on the 9th he had been with a detachment of one Subadar, three Havildars, two Naicks, one Bugler, and sixty-five Sipahees, with a band of Mozumah warriors, to Joshe-mah, to procure rice and to seize a noted warrior, who had fought against us on the 10th

December. Whilst they were in the village of Joshe-mah, a band of Kohe-mah warriors in full war costume were discovered treacherously coming towards them; but the Kono-mah Nagahs were so impatient to go out to fight them, that the Kohe-mahs took fright and fled back to their own village. The noted warrior being sick, was found in a hut and carried off a prisoner to Mozo-mah, and the detachment returned to Mozo-mah uninterrupted, although an alarm was given that villages would come to the rescue. Captain Reed now thought it advisable to send down for a whole company of the 2nd Assam Light Infantry from Golaghaut; half the company to come to Mozo-mah, and the remainder to stay at Dheemahpoor, as he had only 196 men at Mozo-mah. A further reason for more troops was, that a rumour was spread that 3,000 Muneepoor troops were coming to assist the Nagahs against us; and to prevent the hostile clans uniting their forces, he proceeded to Kono-mah, in the hope that they might be induced to attack our force in the open field, which was greatly desired.

Having been informed on the 21st January, 1851, that a strong party of the enemy were sheltered in the village of Poplongmaee, Captain Reed determined to make a night march to ap-

prehend them; but owing to the darkness of the night, when he reached the heights beyond Konomah, it was found impossible to get to Poplongmaee before daylight. He, therefore, bivouacked on the mountains all night, and after a tedious march the following day over high mountains, about three o'clock at night they approached Poplongmaee; but the enemy were fully aware of their movements, and ran away. Fines were imposed on the houses in which the enemy had been sheltered, and those who did not redeem their property had their houses burned. The troops stayed at Poplongmaee two days, to allow of some rice being sent off to Mozo-mah. The night attack seemed to have instilled a wholesome dread of our vengeance into the minds of the people, if they sheltered the enemy.

After this expedition, Captain Reed proceeded to the eastward with two three-pounders, one mortar, and 100 men, to visit a large village which had a short time ago sent a challenge, by demanding why the Sipahees did not come to fight them. On the 3rd February, the party reached Sassah-mah, where they heard that a man had been killed by the Nagahs of Kegue-mah. This village was visited in order to apprehend

the offender, and finding it vacated, the houses of the clan concerned in the murder were burned to the ground. After proceeding a little further, they came on six villages called Sapheh-mah, inhabited by a very rude people, who were ill-disposed towards us. Two of the villages came in and paid tribute, but the others declared they were ready to meet us with spear and shield; consequently, after halting two days, and not being able to get them to give rice, a village which they had vacated was burned to the ground, and notice was sent to the other clans that, if they did not come in, their villages would share the same fate. This had the desired effect, for early next morning the heads of clans of the whole of the villages came in and inquired what tribute was required; an ample supply of rice was then brought in for the troops.

The Mozo-mah Nagahs understood but little of the language of the people to the eastward, and finding great difficulty in provisioning the troops and transporting the guns, Captain Reed had resolved on not proceeding to make further discoveries; but on the 5th February, two heralds came into camp from Kekre-mah, bearing a challenge from the people to come and prove who

had the greatest power in these hills, they or our Government: the Muneepoories, they said, under Gumbheer Singh, were afraid to fight them, and we seemed afraid also. After seeing our muskets and guns, they scornfully declared they did not care for our (*choongas*) tubes: meaning muskets. "Your Sipahees are flesh and blood as well as we, and we will fight with spear and shield, and see who are the best men: here is a specimen of our weapons," handing over a handsome spear. Their village was said to contain about 1,000 houses, and they were dreaded by all around as a bloodthirsty people who think nothing of murder for the sake of plunder: they boasted of having a man in their village who had killed seventy men, the greater part of them probably murdered, and not killed in fair fight.

As it would have had a most injurious effect to return to Mozo-mah without accepting the challenge of these people, for it would have been attributed to fear, Captain Reed determined at once to uphold the name and honour of the Government by accepting the challenge. He therefore told the messengers, that if they really wished to fight us, they would soon have an opportunity. Captain Reed was accompanied by Lieutenant Vincent, but

hearing that four other villages would join Kekre-mah, the greatest caution was necessary. He, in consequence, sent to Mozo-mah for Lieutenant Campbell to join him with fifty men. On this officer coming out, he had 150 muskets, two three-pounders, and a mortar, and about 800 friendly Nagahs to fight on our side with their spears.

On the 9th February they were encamped at the village of Kede-mah, about two miles from Kekre-mah, and observed the enemy very busy in making impediments on the path leading to the village; and so difficult and steep did the approach appear, that Captain Reed determined not to attack on the southern slope of the hill, but to ascend the mountain about a mile further north. On the 10th, therefore, a march was made to the village of Kego-mah, about two miles distant, and the troops encamped near the river, which runs at the foot of the Kekre-mah Mountains, where they halted for the night. This move puzzled the enemy considerably, as they were uncertain at what part of the mountain the ascent would be made. The next morning, the 11th February, the troops nearly reached the top of the mountain without much molestation; although an attack was attempted on the rearguard, and

one Coolie was wounded, who died the following night.

The advance guard, being urged on by the friendly Nagahs, our allies, got too much in advance; but, having secured a good position on a high piece of ground commanding the village, their fire was most effective. The enemy were now hotly engaged with our friendly Nagahs, fighting with the greatest desperation, and in the heat of battle attempting to cut off the heads of the Nagahs as they killed them. The Sipahees of the 1st and 2nd Assam Light Infantry, however, soon drove them out of the village, killing and wounding many of them. The guns were fired, which created the utmost consternation, and the enemy fled in every direction, utterly discomfited, leaving 100 slain on the field of battle, including many of their most noted warriors. The loss on our side was two Nagahs killed and six wounded, and one camp follower killed and one wounded. We believe the above estimate of the loss of the enemy to be far under the truth. It is currently reported that about 300 Nagahs were killed and wounded upon this occasion; and doubtless many women and children were murdered by our ruthless barbarian allies, who show no mercy

in battle, and delight in bloody warfare, exterminating young and old. Captain Reed states that it was not his wish to destroy the village; but, actuated by feelings of revenge, our Nagah auxiliaries set fire to it on all sides, and a strong wind blowing at the time, the greater part of the houses were soon destroyed, with a great quantity of grain. Only about six houses were saved in the centre of the village, in which the troops took shelter for the night.

So determined and hostile were the enemy, that several times during the night they attempted to attack the troops, and it was found impossible to procure water for the troops during the night without great risk, the enemy lying in ambush in all directions. Even in the evening, when the Sipahees were on the alert, and when the mortar was being fired, a cook sitting close to it was wounded by a spear being thrown at him. The day after the battle, on the 12th, the troops returned to Kekre-mah, and met with no opposition on the way back to Mozo-mah.

Thus fell Kekre-mah, after one of the most bloody battles ever fought in Assam. The Government considered the attack unavoidable, and most creditably conducted by Captain Reed; but the

expedition itself seemed scarcely to have been called for, and the burning of empty houses was regarded as an unnecessary piece of severity. It was not deemed desirable that a post should be maintained at Mozo-mah, and directions were given for the immediate withdrawal of all the troops from the Hills to Dheemahpoor; beyond which no military force was to be maintained, it being the wish of Government to abstain entirely and unreservedly from all concern or meddling with the feuds of the numerous savage tribes beyond our own frontier. Thus terminated the tenth expedition to the Angahmee Nagah hills, in March, 1851.

PART III.

THE DISTRICT OF NOW-GONG.

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CHAPTER XIII.

Field-sports in Assam—Specimens of Assamese music—Assamese customs, &c.

From the vast extent of waste or jungle land everywhere met with in Assam, there are, perhaps, few countries that can be compared with it for affording diversion, of all kinds, for the English sportsman. A shikang or sporting elephant is indispensable; and when seated on the animal's back in a well-secured howdah—a kind of square wooden tower containing shelves for four double-barrel guns—all wild animals of the forest may be fearlessly encountered and overcome. But the reader must not imagine a field-day in Assam unattended with danger, or less exciting than fox-hunting; for at no time would it be safe or prudent to go alone on a solitary elephant, to beat through dense, high, and almost impenetrable reed and grass jungle:

though keen sportsmen frequently do so, and enjoy excellent sport.

To ensure success and avoid danger, a party is generally formed of from three to twenty elephants; making a grand line in this way, tigers, buffaloes, rhinoceroses, deer, and hogs, are all beaten out of their lairs, and can seldom escape death except by flight. On many occasions, buffaloes rush down with awful fury upon the nearest elephant, when, unless the sportsman happens to be an expert shot, the elephant is generally gored and lacerated in a frightful manner, and the mahout or driver of the elephant not unfrequently severely injured. Sometimes the howdah, or tower, is thrown off the elephant's back by the shock sustained from the buffalo's charge, and the sportsman with his guns is hurled prostrate on the ground with the elephant. In this predicament nothing but the immediate assistance of another elephant prevents inevitable destruction.

It is a noble sight to see the wild buffalo, wounded and rendered furious, his head armed with enormous horns, lowered to the ground, rushing down with the speed of a cannon-ball upon the timid elephant; who, however, being well trained, stands firm and receives the shock, which is truly terrific:

the elephant, if not knocked down, is hurled back many yards by the violence and strength of the buffalo's charge.

At first, buffaloes that have long been undisturbed by the sound of a gun, seem to court danger, and proudly walk out to meet it, fiercely pawing the ground and tossing their heads; but death-blows being dealt out freely to their companions, they become in time alarmed at the sight of the elephant and sportsman, when their flight is so rapid that it is no easy matter to come up with them. In Lower and Central Assam large herds of 100 buffaloes are frequently met with; the devastations committed on the paddy fields is incalculable, and numbers of lives are annually lost from their attacks on the people. In one day's sport it is no uncommon event for three or four sportsmen to shoot thirty buffaloes, twenty deer, and a dozen hogs, besides one or two tigers. At times, a tiger, being surrounded by a field of elephants in a small patch of high grass, shows great sport; for as often as he is beaten up by the elephants, he turns round and with a tremendous roar rushes across the plain towards the nearest one, and jumps upon its head or stern; the elephant then becomes dreadfully alarmed, and

screeches out in the most terrific manner, shaking its body with all its power, to free itself from the claws of the enraged monster clinging to it. In this predicament the sportsman is helpless; as from the violent motion of the elephant, all he can do is to hold fast to the howdah, for if thrown out, he would be torn to pieces; but a skilful sportsman, on perceiving the tiger's approach towards his elephant, will generally stop the rapid charge of the tiger by one or two well-directed shots, which will either prove fatal, or so cripple the beast as to render his efforts to charge futile.

Few elephants can be brought to stand repeated charges of a tiger; if the sportsman fail to shoot the tiger in the first charge, the elephant instinctively seems to lose confidence, and no exertions on the part of the mahout can induce the elephant again to encounter the danger of a second charge, by advancing to beat up the tiger concealed in the grass: a tiger's charge is always desperately fierce, and seldom met without making its pursuers feel the power of its fangs and claws, and causing sometimes fatal accidents.

Not less exciting is the rhinoceros hunt. This animal is found in the highest and most dense reed jungle, generally near a river, or Bheel

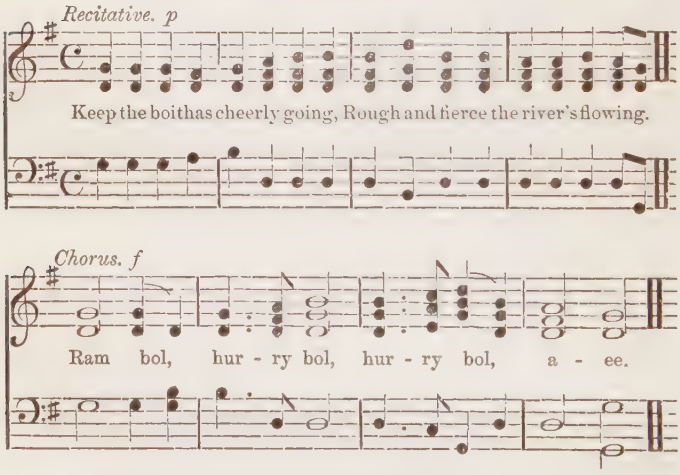
lake, in a very miry place. The squeaking grunt of this beast is peculiarly sharp and fierce, and the elephants become so alarmed that few wait its approach in the shape of a charge, but mostly quit the field with the utmost speed, scarcely giving the sportsman time to have a shot. If the rhinoceros succeeds in overtaking the elephant, it inflicts terrible wounds on the haunches of the latter with its mouth, and with the horn on its nose endeavours to rip up the belly of the elephant. Of all the animals of the forest, the rhinoceros is most feared, from its destructive powers; and, as it possesses an enormously thick skin, it requires a good gun or rifle to bring it down. Nevertheless, we have known several rhinoceroses killed with one ball, if hit in a vital part; otherwise, as with the buffalo, ten or fifteen balls may be fired without effect. The rhinoceros is found in every part of Assam.

The most pleasant sport in Assam is deer shooting: all kinds are found in great numbers, and in open plains many may be killed in a day. Black partridges, and the common gray partridge, are plentiful, and a few quail and hares may be found; but they cannot be pursued on foot, as they lie in the densest and most impenetrable

jungles. An elephant is indispensable, and but few sportsmen are steady enough in a howdah to bag many head of game in a day.

Assam is so intersected by rivers, that the Assamese prefer moving about in their little canoes to travelling by land; the Dooms or Nudeals (watermen) seem greatly to enjoy themselves on these boat trips, for they are always singing songs as they paddle along. A facetious friend has felicitously given me the following version of one of these boat songs universally sung throughout the province:—

ASSAMESE BOAT SONG.



"Keep the boithas cheerly going;
Rough and fierce the river's flowing,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Aee.

"See! the sun is fast declining,
To the moon his charge resigning,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Aee.

"Pull away, boys, nothing fearing,
Though the rapids we are nearing,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Aee.

"In the well-plied oar confiding,
Safely o'er them we are gliding,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Aee.

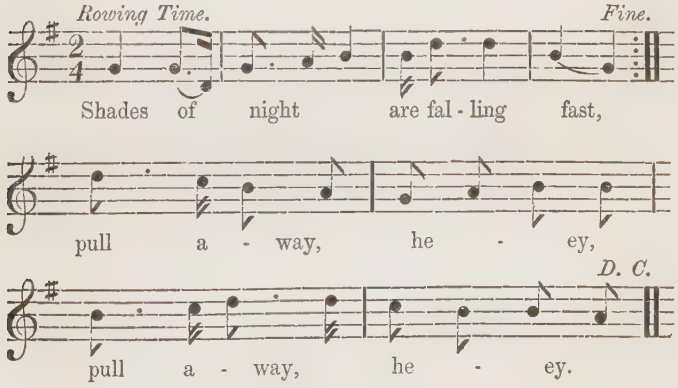
"Keep her clear that granite block there,
See, she nears the sunken rock there,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Aee.

"Now the threatened danger's over,
Nothing from her course shall move her,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Aee.

"Soon we'll make the ghat, my hearties!
Spend the night in jovial parties,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Aee."

For the amusement of my fair readers, I have also added other specimens of Assamese harmony.

AN ASSAMESE AIR.



"Shades of night are falling fast—pull away, eh, hey;
All our toil will soon be past—pull away, eh, hey.

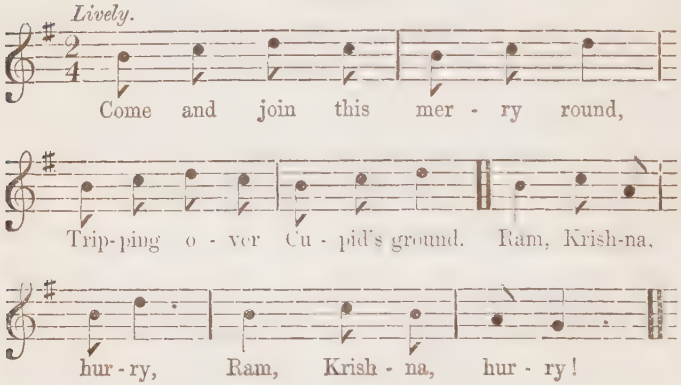
"Round Thamlya's point we steer—pull away, eh, hey;
See the Puckah Ghat appear—pull away, eh, hey.

"Strike together for your lives—pull away, eh, hey,
Towards our sweethearts and our wives—pull away, eh, hey.

"First we smoke the fragrant weed—pull away, eh, hey,
Morpheus then will slumbers speed—pull away, eh, hey.

"We must work if we would live—pull away, eh, hey;
Sahib will our backshish give—pull away, ey, hey."

SONG.



"Come and join this merry round,
Tripping over Cupid's ground,
Ram, Krishna, Hurry.

"Dance and sing we all night long,
This shall be the only song,
Ram, Krishna, Hurry.

"Love and music all the theme,
Till the ruddy morning beam,
Ram, Krishna, Hurry.

"Let the ruddy morn arrive,
It shall but our song revive,
Ram, Krishna, Hurry.

"Aided by the solar ray,
Blithe we'll sing throughout the day,
Ram, Krishna, Hurry.

"Let the shadow upwards tend;
Let the weary sun descend;
Still our song shall find no end!
Ram, Krishna, Hurry."

The character of the Assamese cannot be better illustrated, than by noticing some of their customs. In former times, none but the nobility, the Boorah Gohain, Bur Patra Gohain, Bur Gohain, who formed the chief council of the kingdom, were permitted to wear shoes; and to this day the Assamese strictly adhere to the custom, for shoes are not worn by the lower classes throughout the country.

The right or title to ride in a palkee or dola was, in ancient times, only enjoyed by the nobles, and they had to pay for the honour of being permitted to ride in such a conveyance 1,000 rupees (100*l.*) to the Rajah. A short time since, a native judge, on being asked why he did not use a palkee, replied, "Any one may now ride in a palkee; in former days, when we paid 1,000 rupees to ride in a palkee or dola, then there was some dignity in being thus conveyed, and none but men of rank were entitled to this privilege."

In the reign of Komlessur, king from 1794 A.D. to 1809 A.D., the Boora Gohain, or prime minister, established the practice of having all the Dooms or fishermen marked on the forehead with the sign of a fish, pricked into the skin with the juice of the bela nut, which is indelible. There was a Burrah or chief appointed to enforce the custom, and the fee received by him was four annas for every person thus stamped. No fisherman could decline receiving the mark, but all were required to submit to the operation; even in the present day there are fishermen still living in the Now-Gong district, bearing the sign of a fish on their foreheads.

The origin of this barbarous custom is said to have been as follows:—On the occasion of some grand festival or meeting of Hindoos, a fisherman had accidentally been present; and, in consequence, the whole of the Hindoos had become contaminated, or lost caste, and purachit atonement was necessary. This, however, they thought could be avoided by making the fisherman a Hindoo, by allowing him to touch their food; but the circumstance reaching the Boora Gohain's ears, he directed the whole party to be instantly marked with the sign of a fish on the forehead. Another current story is, that

the custom was established to prevent the mixture of different castes, which it was supposed would ensure the stability of the respectable classes, and their complete separation from any intercourse with the lower orders.

The class termed horees or sweepers were subject to a similar degrading mark; all of this grade being stamped with the sign of a broom on the forehead. The king's khell or clan of doolee or palkee bearers were also distinguished by having the sign of the kekooree dola, a kind of palkee, pricked into the skin of the right arm. To ensure the separation of the different low classes from the higher orders, another striking distinction was enforced: neither moossulmen, fishermen, sweepers, nor braziers, were permitted to wear long hair. The dooms or fishermen of the present day not bearing the mark of a fish on their forehead, are highly displeased at being called by that name; they consider it a disgrace or insult, and insist on being called nuddeals, or watermen, which title in their estimation is more honourable. In numerous ways the nobility and respectable classes raised up insuperable barriers to secure their distinction and separation from the meaner castes. No person of low birth

could wear the *chudder* or sheet usually thrown over the body as a covering, except it was folded on the left shoulder and not on the right.

Their superstition is likewise apparent in their never cutting bamboos on a Saturday or Tuesday, supposing it to be unfortunate, and that the stems of the bamboo so cut will dry up and not shoot out again. A not uncommon custom prevalent in Assam, is to effect a marriage against the consent of parents. Every year in the month of April the Behoo festival takes place; this being kept up with music, dancing, and rejoicing, and lasting seven days, all classes are particularly fond of being present on this occasion. An unfortunate youth having failed to secure the consent of the parents of the girl he has selected to be his wife, then has recourse to a stratagem to effect his object. He lays wait in the road till the damsel passes by to the fair or festival with her female relatives, when, with the aid of his companions, he carries off the feigning reluctant bride, and immediately marries her privately; when in a few days the parents are obliged to be reconciled and consent to a public marriage.

During the Assam dynasty, this offence was punished with some severity; the offending youth

receiving forty stripes with a leathern strap on his naked back. The season of the Behoo, or spring festival, however, has always been claimed by the female sex as a period of considerable license; and the exercise of their freedom within that period does not seem to be attended with any stain, blemish, or loss of reputation. When the day of marriage has been fixed on, the bridegroom and bride are both bathed daily for five or three days before marriage by the females of the family, who bring two pots of water from the river, morning and evening, and throw it over them: excepting on Saturdays and Tuesdays; on which days one pot only is thrown over the bride and bridegroom, as these days are consecrated and unlucky, being called after the planets, Mars and Saturn.

If the funeral obsequies of parents be not performed, children cannot marry till they are. Neither can a younger brother marry before the elder, unless the elder brother gives in writing his permission to his younger brother; after which the elder cannot marry, as he is considered to have renounced all worldly connection: or if he does marry he is not associated with by his family, and is deemed an outcast or excommunicated. This custom, however, is not strictly adhered to in

Assam: I have known instances to the contrary unattended with these consequences. The priest was bribed and the community feasted, when the elder brother was permitted to marry after his younger brother.

If a man dies inside a house, no Hindoo can eat in it afterward, or reside in it, as it has become impure; it is generally pulled down and burned, and a new house erected on the same spot. All Assamese when dying are, therefore, invariably brought out to die in the open air on the bare ground, that the building may be preserved; and also to ensure the happier liberation of the spirit from the body.

The general mode of fighting is abuse with gross foul language, pulling the hair, and striking with the elbow, not with clenched fist. If a man has his hair pulled in a quarrel he is dishonoured; he must shave off his long locks immediately, and obtain *purachit* absolution from the priest by paying him a sum of money and giving a feast to the community; as he is excommunicated, and not considered a member of the society till the ceremony of purachit atonement has been performed.

There are many kinds of slaves in Assam, distinguished by distinct appellations. The Moorukea

is a kind of chapunea, neither servant, slave, nor equal, but partaking of all. The master provides the Moorukea with a pair of bullocks and a plough, and he tills his master's land for two days. On the third day the Moorukea may plough his own ground with his master's bullocks and plough. If he does not take his reward or wages thus, by using his master's cattle and implements of husbandry, he is a perfect slave, lives in his master's house, is constantly fed and worked, and receives a share of the produce.

CHAPTER XIV.

The district of Now-Gong.

In July, 1833, the district of Now-Gong was separated from Durrung, and distinct civil establishments were sanctioned for carrying on business in the civil, criminal, and collectors' courts.

The boundaries of the district are formed, on the east, by the Dhunseeree and Deeyong rivers, and an undefined, unexplored, tract of country occupied by Angahmee Nagahs; on the west, by the Mongah of Desh Cumooreah in the Kamroop district; the Burrumpooter on the north; and on the south, by Jynteea, and the Tytingah river in Northern Cachar, and a high range of mountains separating Now-Gong from Muneepoor. Within this boundary the number of square miles in the whole district amounts to 8,712.

The head-quarters of the Zillah of Now-Gong have been removed to three different places since

it became a substantive division. It was first established by Lieutenant Rutherford in July 1833, at Pooranah Godoun, in the midst of the village of Meekir Hatt, on the left bank of the river Kullung, eight miles east of the present station; but this was given up in May, 1835, on account of the site being confined, and so densely inhabited that there was no spare land to admit of public buildings being erected, except by the removal of the Ryutts. The second station selected was Runggagura; but this was found to be unhealthy, and not sufficiently central for the convenience of the people resorting to the courts; therefore, in June, 1839, the third and present station of Now-Gong was selected, on the left bank of the Kullung river. Now-Gong is likewise called Kuggreejan (Reed stream), from the name of a small stream which has forced its way out of the Kullung river, a little above the station, on the opposite bank, and passing through Taleea Gown to the Roopohee river.

Now-Gong, it will be admitted, enjoys as pretty a circle of carriage roads as any zillah in Assam. The road, winding along the banks of the Moree Kullung lake, is particularly picturesque, passing beautiful gardens, cultivated fields, and innumer-

able hamlets, which evince the comfort and prosperity of the inhabitants. The road to Deemooroogooree, east of the stations, and leading on to Belogooree, which is nine miles distant, presents at all times an animated scene, as the land is in a state of high cultivation, and the whole country seems studded with barrees, or gardens, and flourishing villages. An extensive *bund* road protects and secures the entire front of the station from annual deep inundations; but, notwithstanding this precaution, as the soil is sandy, the water percolates through the bund-roads, and inundates the land: a common occurrence in Assam. At Now-Gong, nearly half the station is a sheet of water; and it cannot well be otherwise, as the station is low and full of hollows, or channels of the beds of rivers or streams that have taken other courses. Some little money has been expended on improvements by Government, but a vast deal remains to be done before Now-Gong can have any pretension to rank high in point of salubrity.

The public buildings at Now-Gong include a kacherry or court, a handsome and spacious edifice, in which the principal assistant in charge of the district, a junior assistant, a sub-assistant, a sudder ameen and moonsiff (the native judges),

conduct business in the judicial, magisterial, and revenue departments. A new brick gaol and circuit house have likewise been constructed, and a brick thannoh and a record office were erected in 1845-46. There are two ghats on the river, and a stupendous bridge on saul posts over the Kullung river, 202 yards long, 30 feet high, and 16 feet wide, was erected by the magistrates in 1847. In the same year, the magistrates likewise erected a most substantial churchyard-wall of brick, 150 feet square. This was much required, as the sight of the exposed Christian graves in a heathen land, daily desecrated by the natives, and apparently utterly neglected and uncared for by Europeans, was discreditable, and led to unfavourable impressions of their rulers being formed by the Assamese. There are seven private bungalows, three of brick, and four of lath and plaster, occupied by the principal assistant, junior assistant, sub-assistant, apothecary, and missionaries.

Although Now-Gong is regarded by many as one of the hottest and most unhealthy stations in Assam, some years' experience proves it to be as salubrious, if not more so, than any other station in Assam. It is allowed that, at times,

the heat is very oppressive, and fevers of the most malignant kind prevail throughout the district; some parts of which cannot be visited in any season of the year by Europeans, without danger of being prostrated by the deadly malaria of the dense, damp forests, and miry reed jungles. The diseases common at Now-Gong, are described in the following extract from the medical annual report of Now-Gong, made in 1843, by Mr. Apothecary Simons:—

"The climate of the station, through its situation on an open plain removed from the vicinity of the hills, is from all accounts salubrious; but, as the changes in the atmosphere and the periodical winds and rainy season are the same as are experienced in the whole valley of Assam, it cannot differ very materially in point of healthiness from any of the adjoining districts. The prevailing diseases appear to be dysentery, diarrhœa, fever, spleen, *seqwala* of fever and rheumatism, and ulcers. Dysentery attacks all classes of the population, especially those in the habit of making use of opium. The convicts in the gaol appear to be the principal sufferers; owing, probably, to the disuse of opium while incarcerated, and other depressing causes depen-

dent on confinement. Diarrhœa is the next disease which produces such great mortality amongst the population and prisoners. It is also produced by the same causes as dysentery, with this exception, that it is more dependent on atmospherical changes and the use of indigestible and crude food. Fevers of the intermittent type are the most common, combined with affections of the spleen, and frequently run on to dysentery and diarrhœa. Remittent fevers are not very common, attacking but few of the natives. In Europeans, the disease, being always accompanied with determination to the brain, generally proves fatal; and in them it is only produced by exposure in the surrounding country and vicinity of marshes. Rheumatism attacks but few, and is generally prevalent during the rainy and cold season. Ulcers are produced amongst the convicts by the chafing of the irons. The endemic disease of this district is bronchoule, by which one-third of the population is affected; and it attacks even the residents, who are not natives of Assam. It seems apparently to be confined to females and males of lax fibre and of a cachectic disposition of body. The cause of the disease is principally owing to the use of

stagnant water, and residing in villages which are in the vicinity of extensive marshes.

"The monthly average range of the thermometer in a brick bungalow in 1851, taken by the medical officer of Now-Gong, is shown by the following table.

"July, August, and September, are the hottest months, and from a number of years' experience we can state that, generally, the range of the thermometer is from 86° to 92° in those months. The fall of rain, likewise, varies from sixty to eighty inches in the year."

Monthly average range of the thermometer for 1851.				Number of inches of rain by the thermometer in each month of 1851.		
	Maximum.	Medium.	Minimum.		In.	Deg.
January 1851..	67	65	64	January 1851..	0	0
February „ ..	72	66	61 9	February „ ..	2	85
March „ ..	75 1	74 9	68 7	March „ ..	2	10
April „ ..	78 20½	77 25⅓	72 9½	April „ ..	8	55
May „ ...	81 30	80 6	76 23	May „ ..	8	85
June „ ..	82 28	81 20	80 6	June „ ..	17	50
July „ ..	85 10	84 22	82 6	July „ ..	7	35
August „ ..	85 13½	85 5	82 2½	August „ ..	22	20
September„ ..	85 6	84 6	81 15	September„ ..	4	65
October „ ..	82 14	81 13	76 20	October „ ..	7	0
November„ ..	75 1	73 26	66 24	November„ ..	0	40
December „ ..	71 7	68 18	59 20	December „ ..	2	0
				Total inches ..	83	45

To facilitate the fiscal management of the district, it is divided into twelve mehals or sections,

and the revenue settlements are made with 278 mongahs. The gross land revenue for 1851-52 was 1,54,800 rs. 12 as. 3 p., and net revenue 1,28,985 rs. 4 as. 5 p.* Each poorah of a land is considered equal to an English acre and a quarter, which is taxed at different rates; the land on the plains, being the 1st class, at 1 r. 4 as. per poorah; all other kinds or qualities at 14 as. per poorah. In the Hills, hoes are taxed at 1 r. 2 as. each, and where the hoe tax is not in force—amongst the Hill tribes of Nagahs, Kookies, and Cacharees—houses are taxed at 8 as. and 1 r., and the Meekirs at 2 rs. 4 as. per house, for any quantity of land cultivated. Fisheries are sold to heads of villages at so much for the lake or pond for the year. The community are allowed to fish in all small ponds and grates, and no pond is let for less than 20 rs. In no part of India is the rent so low as in Assam, and the fertility and productiveness of the soil cannot be disputed.

Every Mozah, or village, is held by a Mongahdar, or chief of the community, who receives 12 rs. 8 as. per cent. on the amount collected from his mongahs, for the trouble of collecting the revenue from each ryutt, or peasant, and paying it into

* See Tables in Appendix.

the collector's treasury. The Mongahdar is assisted in this labour by a kaguttee, or village accountant, who measures the land and keeps accounts of the ryutts, or peasants, of the extent and kinds of land occupied by each ryutt, and the amount of revenue to be paid by him yearly; and each ryutt is furnished with a pottah of this account: that is, a statement of the quantity and kind of land in his possession, and the amount of revenue he has to pay annually. This statement, being signed by the collector, forms the ryutt's title-deeds, or right of possession to his land, and is a check on the Mongahdar, if he collects more than the amount at which the ryutt is assessed. The village kagutty received 2 rs. 8 as. per cent. on the revenue collected, as a remuneration for his duties. A ticklah, or peon, is also allowed to assist the Mongahdar in summoning the ryutts to pay him their revenue. One ticklah is sanctioned for every 500 rupees of revenue, whose remuneration is 6 rs. per annum.

The quantity of land granted in this district, for charitable and religious endowments, denominated lakhiraj land, amounts to 21,065 ps. 0 s. 2 ks. 18½ l. Out of this large tract of land, only 6,073 p. 1 s. 4 ks. 16 ls. are under cultivation, assessed at

half the khiraj or full rates. The remainder, 14,491 ps. 2 ds. 3 ks. 2 ls., is waste or jungle land. These grants have been sanctioned in thirty-two decrees, eight on the production of the customary copperplates of the ancient kings of Assam, and twenty-four on oral testimony.

The population of the district is estimated by Captain Butler, Principal Assistant-Commander, at 248,965 persons, exclusive of Angahmee and Rengmah Nagahs, amounting to 104,140.

In different parts of the district, Government has established fourteen vernacular schools for the instruction of the Assamese population; 836 scholars are registered in the school, and the average daily attendance is 608. The expense of the schools amounts to 1,600 rs. per annum. The proficiency attained by the boys at these institutions is very low indeed; few stay longer than is sufficient to enable them to read and write a common petition and a little arithmetic, with a slight knowledge of surveying in use in Assam. When their education is, in their own opinion, complete, they are qualified to become village kaguttees, or writers.

One of the greatest impediments to the advancement of education in Assam, is the indifference

with which it is received by the respectable classes. They show no wish whatever to see the rising generation educated, or made wiser than themselves: in fact, I am half inclined to believe that, if the higher classes could prevent the youth of Assam from being instructed, they would not hesitate to do so. The supineness and indifference of the most influential men in the district, the Bishoyahs, or Mongahdars, can scarcely be imagined, except by those in personal and constant intercourse with them. They seldom visit the schools, and when required to repair or build a school-house, they deem it a kind of oppression: it is, indeed, lamentable to witness the lukewarmness of the native gentry of Assam in regard to education. To this cause chiefly, and to the fact that the only disaffected subjects of Government are in the want of efficient schoolmasters, can be justly attributed the circumstance that no greater progress has been made in instructing the youth of Assam.

Another great obstacle to the spread of knowledge throughout Assam, is the influence of the priesthood, who employ most oppressive modes of keeping the people in subjection to themselves, through gross ignorance and superstition. Although the priests are interdicted from collecting

more than the Government-rate of Khiraj land, there is little doubt but that twice that amount is exacted: indeed the Ryutts are mere slaves, and obliged to be at the call of the Udheekary or chief priest, for any service he thinks proper to command. So great is the oppression of these priests, that nearly two-thirds of their grants are perfectly waste. It would be well if their tyranny was confined to exacting the utmost of the produce of the land the Ryutts can give; but this is not all. They demand fromthe Ryutts, on a variety of pleas, Bagee Khurcha, or Hath Khurch money, to defray present necessities; Burgonee, a general tax; Magunee, or free gifts of dhan, sursoo, oil, and rice; Morecha, or fees on marriage; and Sulamee, or presents on appointing their servants to conduct the fiscal duties of the shustro land.

The Udheekary, or chief priest, likewise exercises the power of excommunication for civil offences; and, until the offenders pay a heavy fine and receive purachit absolution, they are excluded from society and are perfect outcasts: no one daring to associate, or to eat, or drink with them, or to lend them any assistance whatever. Rather, therefore, than incur the displeasure of

the chief priest, the Ryutts will submit to almost any oppression that can be imagined.

The very great consideration shown to these priests, by allowing them such an extent of country on one-half Khiraj rates, would, from any other class of men, have called forth the utmost gratitude; but the reverse is the case with these insatiate priests. Though they had lost everything under the Burmese rule, and on the British conquest acquired grants to which they had lost all title or claim, yet they may truly be said to be the only disaffected subjects of Government in the plains of Assam. The priests, in short, may be considered the greatest impediment we have to contend with, in enlightening the rising generation. Possessed of great power over the minds of the people, bigoted, ignorant, and avaricious, they do not promote, in the smallest degree, through the means at their disposal, the education of the people.

CHAPTER XV.

The future prospects of the Now-Gong district.

THE district of Now-Gong, being intersected by numerous rivers and streams, all more or less navigable for many months in the year, is thus rendered particularly well adapted for commerce. The soil is rich; it abounds in fine forests of sawl timber in Dantipar, with this advantage over other parts of Assam, that from no point has the timber to be conveyed a greater distance than four miles to a navigable stream. Coal also has been met with in several places, though it has not yet been thoroughly examined as to extent or quality; but mines will doubtless be worked to supply steamers ere long. Limestone is found in abundance in Northern Cachar; but it has not yet been burned in any quantity.

The staple products of the district are rice, mustard-seed, cotton, silk, lac, wax, sugar, treacle, ivory, and opium.

In 1847, there were 2,426 poorahs of land cultivated with opium; and, calculating that a poorah of land yields 10 seers of cotton cloth saturated with kanee or opium, the annual produce was 606 maunds 20 seers, which is equal to 48,520 lbs. Valuing it at the average rate of 5 rs. per seer, the Ryutts realized from the sale of opium 1,21,300 rs. There is no article of commerce sought after with such intense avidity in Assam as kanee or opium; and its baneful effects can only be appreciated by those who witness the degeneracy of the people. It is consumed by all classes, high and low, rich and poor, old and young, men, women, and even children; and its consumption is limited only by the purse or means of the opium eater. It is affirmed that the ecstatic delight of the confirmed opium eater is so great that he cannot, or would not for all the world, forego his daily dose of the pernicious drug; and we know of no instance of a person having relinquished the habit, who had once been enslaved.

Two-thirds of the population are addicted to the use of opium, and the tendency to the increase of crime, consequent thereon, must be admitted. When individuals are brought up before the magistrate, charged with larceny and burglary, nine out

of ten invariably state that they committed the crime to procure opium. No extra tax is levied on opium; but there is little doubt but that if a heavy tax were imposed on its cultivation, the drug would not be raised to such an extent, and consequently the price would be greatly enhanced, so that the Ryutts could not afford to purchase it. The richer classes would then enjoy the luxury, while the mass of the people being gradually weaned from the habit by the increased taxation on opium, would, probably, in the course of time give it up altogether. Opium is now sold to the people by Government; but, unless a high tax be imposed on the cultivation of opium in Assam, its consumption will not diminish: when it can only be procured by purchase, the people will learn to do without it, or a much smaller quantity than they now grow in the gardens will be consumed.

In no district in Assam are the people in more prosperous circumstances than in Now-Gong. Rice, their common food, is cheap and abundant; numerous rivers and lakes afford a plentiful supply of fish; their gardens furnish vegetables and fruit; and the climate rendering but little clothing necessary, with a trifling revenue to pay, they have every reason to be satisfied and contented;

and, I believe, they are grateful for the protection of the British Government.

With all these advantages, however, they are a licentious, degraded race, and appear degenerating rapidly. Numbers of children die annually, and the period of their existence seems diminishing. Few adults attain old age, and we almost despair of the population increasing, or of their condition being ameliorated by education or the acquirement of more industrial habits. In time, the Assamese might intermarry with the athletic Hill races; but these, unfortunately, on becoming partially civilized by mixing with and marrying Assamese, grow addicted to the use of opium, and deprive us of the hope of a hardier or more enterprising race eventually springing up in Assam. Opium, it is said, was first introduced into Assam in 1794 from Bengal, when our troops assisted the Rajah against the Muttucks; since then it has spread over the whole country, and deteriorated and enfeebled the population.

Previously to the conquest of Assam, in 1824, the inhabitants of Jynteea were in the frequent habit of capturing our subjects in Sylhet, to offer up as sacrifices at the shrine of Kalee. In 1832, two British subjects were passing along the high

road in Assam, when they were suddenly seized and carried up into the Hills in the neighbourhood of Goba, in the Now-Gong district. After having been decked out with new clothes and jewels, they were led away to be sacrificed, together with two other persons, also subjects of the British Government. One of the individuals, however, succeeded in making his escape, and on his return to the plains, he gave information of what had occurred; and as no tidings were ever afterwards heard of the three other individuals, little doubt remained but that they were sacrificed. The chief had been frequently required to surrender the guilty individuals, but all to no purpose; and there being strong reason for believing that the chief had wilfully screened the perpetrators of this horrible crime, the Governor-General, Lord William Bentinck, in February, 1835, confiscated all his territory situated in the plains. Dantipar consequently became annexed to the district of Now-Gong; and these horrible atrocities were put a stop to.

The barbarous practices of the Burmese, who, in their invasion of Assam, massacred great numbers of the inhabitants in cold blood, are still remembered by the people of this district, and spoken of with horror and indignation. In

1819-20, A.D., on the banks of the Kullung river, in Chotopotong Mongah (on the estate occupied by Lukhy Huzaree, of infamous memory as the informer and destroyer of his countrymen), the Burmese apprehended a vast number of men, women, and children, that they might slaughter them in a summary manner, in revenge for the opposition made to the Burmese army at Gowahattee.

To strike terror into the minds of the inhabitants, fifty men were decapitated in one day. A large building was then erected of bamboos and grass, with a raised bamboo platform; into this house were thrust men, children, and poor innocent women with infants, and a large quantity of fuel having been placed round the building, it was ignited: in a few minutes—it is said by witnesses of the scene now living—two hundred persons were consumed in the flames, merely because they had the misfortune to be related to those who had served in the Assamese army against the Burmese.

Many individuals, who escaped from these massacres, have assured me that innumerable horrible acts of torture and barbarity were also resorted to on that memorable day by these inhuman savages. All who were suspected of being inimical

to the reign of terror, were seized and bound by Burmese executioners, who cut off the lobes of the poor victims' ears and choice portions of the body, such as the points of the shoulders, and actually ate the raw flesh before the living sufferers. They then inhumanly inflicted, with a sword, deep but not mortal gashes on the body, that the mutilated might die slowly, and finally closed the tragedy by disembowelling the wretched victims. Other diabolical acts of cruelty, practised by these monsters of humanity, have been detailed to me by persons now living with a minuteness which leaves no doubt of the authenticity of the facts; but they are so shocking that I cannot describe them.

I will turn from these cruelties, so revolting to humanity, and with pleasure place on record the improvements that have taken place in Assam under British rule.

When I first came to Assam in 1837, there were but few brick bungalows with glass doors in the province, and every station was lost in jungle and swamps; but vast improvements have been effected. Brick bungalows with glass doors, brick gaols, courts of justice, record offices, and treasuries, are everywhere to be met with. Roads, and bridges of brick, iron, and wood, are being con-

structed, and the Sudder stations are beginning to show the advance of civilization. The revenue, being better superintended, has augmented, but not to that extent which might have been expected had the population gone on increasing: the oldest residents, however, can scarcely venture to say that the population has much increased. This may be accounted for by the fact that thousands are annually swept off by fevers, cholera, dysentery, and small-pox; while the numerous deaths of children, and the too prevalent use of opium, deprive us of all hope of a dense population for ages to come.

Immense tracts of forest still remain untilled; while the apathy, want of enterprise, and few necessities of the people preclude us also from anticipating that the Assamese will become a great trading people with the province of Bengal. As far as their effeminacy and want of energy will permit, however, it is satisfactory to find that they are in better circumstances than the peasantry in any other part of India, and appreciate the blessings of British rule.

If the American Baptist Missionaries should hereafter succeed in raising up a Christian community, we cannot doubt but that the result would

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be most beneficial. An orphan institution has already been established by them at Now-Gong, and about twenty orphan children have thus met with an asylum, which will provide both for their temporal and moral wants. The establishment is so well conducted as to merit the support of the Christian community; the children, male and female, are taught to read and write, and instructed in the principles of Christianity. When they attain the years of discretion, we may look forward to the formation of a Christian village of cultivators; and from this class we may eventually, with the blessing of Providence, anticipate the spread of the Gospel throughout the province. Hitherto, however, few native converts have been made; nevertheless, some progress has been effected in educating the people, and making them capable of understanding the Gospel.

The American Baptist Missionaries, at Seebsaghur, publish a monthly illustrated newspaper in the Assamese language. It is very creditably got up, and diffuses useful knowledge with morality; so that, if read, it must be attended with the best results, by enlarging the minds of the natives, and giving them correct ideas of the English Government and other nations.

The English residents have not been less mindful of their spiritual wants. They have collected subscriptions, and erected a handsome church at Gowahattee, and a small chapel at Tezpore. A pretty church is likewise completed at Dibrooghur, in Upper Assam; and a minister of the Church of England, who resides permanently at Gowahattee, makes an annual tour to all the stations in Lower Assam.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

A.

ABSTRACT of the treaty made with Tooleeram Sènaputtee by Captain Jenkins, Agent to the Governor-General, 3rd November, 1834.

"1st. Tooleeram resigns to Government all the tracts of country disputed by him and Gobind-ram, and Doorgah-ram, viz.: all the land lying between the rivers Muhaur and Deeyong to their junction north, and all that portion of the country between the Deeyong and the Kopee rivers till they join on the north.

"2nd. Excepting the tract above noted, the boundaries of the country to remain in his possession are formed as follows: on the south, the Muhaur river and Nagah hills; the Deeyong river on the west; the Dhunseeree river on the east, and the Deeyong and Jummoonah rivers on the north. For this territory Tooleeram agrees to pay tribute annually, four pairs of elephants' tusks, each pair weighing thirty-five seers.

"3rd. As long as Tooleeram lives he will receive from Government a pension of fifty rupees *per mensem*, and promptly obey all orders issued to him by any officer of the British Government.

"4th. The British Government may locate troops in any part of the country, and Tooleeram is bound to supply them with provisions and coolies, receiving payment for the same.

"5th. Tooleeram will decide all petty offences, according to the custom of the country, and govern the people in such a manner as shall be satisfactory to them. Cases of murder, dacoity, and other heinous offences occurring, he is to investigate immediately, and apprehend all persons concerned, and forward them to the European authorities wherever he may be directed. If any offender takes refuge within his territory, he will immediately apprehend him and deliver him over to the constituted authorities.

"6th. Tooleeram has no authority to levy taxes or customs on the rivers Deeyong, Muhaur, and Jummoonah.

"7th. If Tooleeram's territory is invaded by an enemy, he will report the circumstance to Government, when troops will be furnished to maintain him in possession of his country: but he is not to go to war with any State without the sanction of Government.

"8th. Mongahdars in the British territory will not prevent Ryutts resorting to Tooleeram's territory, and he will not offer any impediment to their departure from his jurisdiction.

"9th. If Tooleeram acts contrary to any of the above stipulations, or governs his subjects unjustly, then the territory may be otherwise disposed of; or the British Government may attach it, and retain permanent possession of it."

B.

Table exhibiting the Revenue of Zillah Now-Gong, Assam, for the year 1258 B.S., or 1851-52 A.D., derived from every source—namely, Land, Hoes, Houses, and Fisheries.

Name of Mehals.	Amount of Revenue on Lands.	Amount of Revenue on Hoes.	Amount of Revenue on Houses.	Amount of Revenue on Fisheries.	Total Gross Revenue.	Amount of Ticklahs sanctioned by Government.	Amount of Commission to Mongahdars and Kaguttys.	Total Deduction.	Net Revenue.
	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.
Now-Gong	28,681 9 6	0 0 0	0 0 0	166 0 0	28,847 9 6	318 0 0	4,310 5 1	4,628 5 1	24,219 4 5
Koliabur	6,646 11 9	0 0 0	0 0 0	65 0 0	6,711 11 9	90 0 0	983 7 10	1,073 7 10	5,638 3 11
Meekirpor	8,012 3 8	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	8,012 3 8	90 0 0	1,188 5 4	1,278 5 4	6,733 14 4
Chaporee	14,374 7 1	0 0 0	0 0 0	115 0 0	14,489 7 1	186 0 0	2,298 13 10	2,484 13 10	12,004 9 3
Raha	49,845 2 11	0 0 0	0 0 0	521 0 0	50,366 2 11	516 0 0	9,070 12 11	9,586 12 11	40,779 6 0
Jumoonamookh	16,773 9 3	891 0 0	286 14 0	51 0 0	18,002 7 3	222 0 0	2,675 2 0	2,879 2 0	15,105 5 3
Morung	5,087 12 1	0 0 0	150 12 0	50 0 0	5,288 8 1	72 0 0	774 9 6	846 9 6	4,441 14 7
Dantipor	13,506 8 10	0 0 0	54 0 0	186 0 0	13,746 8 10	144 0 0	2,012 6 11	2,156 6 11	11,590 1 11
Meekirhill	0 0 0	0 0 0	3,361 8 0	0 0 0	3,361 8 0	90 0 0	487 11 5	577 11 5	2,783 12 7
Julkur	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	1,627 0 0	1,627 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	1,627 0 0
Perbutjooar	0 0 0	0 0 0	2,286 8 0	0 0 0	2,286 8 0	0 0 0	285 13 0	285 13 0	2,000 11 0
Total	142,928 1 1	891 0 0	6,139 10 0	2,781 0 0	152,739 11 1	1,728 0 0	24,087 7 10	25,815 7 10	126,924 3 3
Lakhiraj	2,061 1 2	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	2,061 1 2	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	2,061 1 2
Grand Total	144,989 2 3	891 0 0	6,139 10 0	2,781 0 0	154,800 12 3	1,728 0 0	24,087 7 10	25,815 7 10	128,985 4 5

C.

Table showing the quantity of cultivated land of each kind, and Gross Revenue of the land cultivated in several Monzahs of Now-Gong, Assam, for the year 1258 B.S., or 1851-52.

Numbers	Name of Mehals.	Roopeet.		Furringuttee.		Bowtullee.	
		Quantity of Roopeet Land.	Amount of Revenue.	Quantity of Furringuttee Land.	Amount of Revenue.	Quantity of Bowtullee Land.	Amount of Revenue.
		POORS. D. K. L.	RS. A. P.	POORS. D. K. L.	RS. A. P.	POORS. D. K. L.	RS. A. P.
1	Now-Gong	13,695 2 3 19	17,119 12 9	4,281 2 2 16½	3,746 4 0	2,722 0 2 12	2,381 13 5
2	Koliabur	3,295 1 2 0½	4,119 3 1	1,629 2 0 4½	1,425 13 2	66 2 0 2½	58 3 1
3	Meekirpor	5,443 1 0 13⅓	6,804 1 9	354 1 2 0½	310 0 11	112 2 1 5	98 7 10
4	Chaporee	4,132 2 2 3⅓	5,165 12 3	8,112 0 0 1	7,098 1 9	471 3 4 13¼	412 15 10
5	Raha	14,880 2 4 13½	18,600 11 1	21,008 2 3 12¼	18,382 13 5	7,454 3 4 5½	6,523 1 7
6	Jumoonamookh	9,776 3 1 14½	12,221 0 7	2,171 2 3 0¾	1,900 3 1	1,044 3 3 17½	914 0 1
7	Morung	3,220 3 3 2¼	4,026 2 1	536 0 0 3¼	469 0 2	0 3 4 8	0 13 7
8	Dantipar	7,354 0 4 3⅓	9,192 12 1	2,446 1 2 5¼	2,441 9 1	806 2 2 10	705 12 9
9	Meekirhills	..	..	..	..	..	..
10	Julkur	..	..	..	..	..	..
11	Purbutjoar	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Total	61,799 2 2 11	77,249 7 8	40,540 0 1 5⅓	35,472 13 7	12,680 2 3 1"¼	11,095 4 2
12	Lakhiraj	1,131 2 4 1⅓	707 6 6	1,561 3 3 2	683 9 3	721 0 0 4¼	315 11 1
	Grand Total	62,931 1 1 12⅓	77,956 14 2	42,102 0 2 7¾	36,156 6 10	13,401 2 3 18	11,410 15 3

N.B.—A poorah of land is about an acre and a quarter.

C.—*Continued.*

Numbers.	Name of Mehals.	Apootullee.		Booree.		Bustee.		Kuteatullee.	
		Quantity of Apootullee Land.	Amount of Revenue.	Quantity of Booree Land.	Amount of Revenue.	Quantity of Bustee Land.	Amount of Revenue.	Quantity of Kuteatullee Land.	Amount of Revenue.
		POORS. D. K. L.	RS. A. P.	POORS. D. K. L.	RS. A. P.	POORS. D. K. L.	RS. A. P.	POOR. D. K. L.	RS. A. P.
1	Now-Gong	268 0 1 1¼	234 8 9	1,082 3 3 15½	900 5 1	4,564 0 3 7	3,993 9 4	81 3 1 2¼	71 9 3
2	Koliabur	51 2 4 16½	45 4 3	99 0 3 14	86 12 7	834 2 6 6¼	730 3 2	109 0 3 19¼	95 8 10
3	Mukirpar	59 2 3 14	52 3 7	27 0 4 12½	23 13 2	710 3 4 17½	622 1 11	49 0 4 8½	43 1 1
4	Chaporee	157 2 1 10⅓	137 14 1	47 3 2 3	41 14 1	1,533 2 0 13¼	1,341 13 6	28 1 0 8½	24 11 9
5	Raha	1,005 3 4 6½	880 3 10	256 0 1 16	224 1 3	5,583 0 1 14½	4,885 3 3	98 2 1 9⅓	78 6 1
6	Jumoonamookh	280 1 4 10¼	245 3 0	25 2 2 6	22 6 0	1,446 2 3 12	1,265 9 6	117 0 0 15⅓	102 6 0
7	Morung	33 0 4 18⅓	29 1 3	15 3 4 7	13 15 4	500 2 2 18¼	438 1 4	79 0 2 3	69 3 6
8	Dantipar.....	278 3 1 5¼	243 15 4	30 0 2 6	26 5 8	1,113 3 3 11⅓	974 11 0	144 1 3 14	126 6 1
9	Meekirhills....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
10	Julkur	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
11	Perbutjoar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Total	2,135 2 2 2¼	1,868 6 1	1,531 0 0 1¼	1,339 9 2	16,287 2 1 0½	14,251 5 0	698 2 3 1¼	611 4 7
12	Lakhiraj	27 1 1 0¼	11 15 1	25 0 4 1	11 1 5	751 2 0 4	328 13 8	5 2 1 14	2 8 2
	Grand Total.	2,162 3 3 2½	1,880 4 2	1,556 0 4 1¼	1,350 10 7	17,039 0 1 4½	14,580 2 8	704 1 2 15¼	613 12 9

D.

Statement of the quantity of each kind of Khiraj and Lakhiraj Land, and the Gross Revenues, House Tax, Hoe Tax, and Fisheries, with deductions for Commission to Mongahdars, Kaguttees, and Ticklahs, for realizing the Revenues for 1258 B.S., or 1851-52 A.D.

Description of Land.	Quantity of Land. POORS. D. K. L.	Rate. RS. A. P.	Total Gross Revenue. RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.
Roopeet	61,799 2 2 11	1 4 0	77,249 7 8		
Furringuttee	40,540 0 4 5⅛	0 14 0	35,472 13 7		
Boatullee	12,680 2 3 11⅛	0 14 0	11,095 4 2		
Apootullee	2,135 2 2 2¼	0 14 0	1,868 6 1		
Booree	1,531 0 0 1¼	0 14 0	1,339 9 2		
Bustee	16,287 2 1 0½	0 14 0	14,251 5 0		
Kuteatullee	698 2 3 1¼	0 14 0	611 4 7		
Total	135,673 1 1 14⅛		141,888 2 3		
8 Annas rate			1,039 14 10	142,928 1 1	
House Tax				6,139 10 0	
Hoe Tax				891 0 0	
Fisheries				2,781 0 0	152,739 11 1

LAKHIRAJ LANDS.

		Half Rates.			
Roopeet	1,131 2 4 1⅛	0 10 0	707 6 6		
Furringuttee	1,561 3 3 2	0 7 0	683 9 3		
Boatullee	721 0 0 4¼	0 7 0	315 11 1		
Apootullee	27 1 1 0¼	0 7 0	11 15 1		
Booree	25 0 4 1	0 7 0	11 1 5		
Bustee	751 2 0 4	0 7 0	328 13 8		
Kuteatullee	5 2 4 14	0 7 0	2 8 2		
Total Lakhiraj land	4,224 1 2 7¼		2,061 1 2		2,061 1 2
					154,800 12 3

		DEDUCTIONS:		
Grand Total of Khiraj and Lakiraj Land	139,897 2 4 2	Ticklah's commission allowed 1 Ticklah or 6 Rs. for every 500 Rs. per cent.	1,728 0 0	
Lakhiraj Land Uncultivated	17,026 3 3 14¼	Mongahdars' commission at 15 Rs. and 20 Rs. per cent., including Kaguttee	24,087 7 10	25,815 7 10
Grand Total	156,924 2 2 16¼	Net Revenue		128,985 4 5

E.

Table showing the Net Revenue of each Mehal of Now-Gong, Assam, from 1239 B.S., or 1832-33 A.D. to 1249 B.S., or 1842-43 A.D.

Name of Mehals.	Net Revenue for 1239 B.S. or 1832-33 A.D.	Net Revenue for 1240 B.S., or 1833-34 A.D.	Net Revenue for 1241 B.S., or 1834-35 A.D.	Net Revenue for 1242 B.S., or 1835-36 A.D.	Net Revenue for 1243 B.S., or 1836-37 A.D.	Net Revenue for 1244 B.S., or 1837-38 A.D.	Net Revenue for 1245 B.S., or 1838-39 A.D.	Net Revenue for 1246 B.S., or 1839-40 A.D.	Net Revenue for 1247 B.S., or 1840-41 A.D.	Net Revenue for 1248 B.S., or 1841-42 A.D.	Net Revenue for 1249 B.S., or 1842-43 A.D.
	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.
Now-Gong	26,570 9 10	34,639 3 12	18,032 2 1	18,139 1 10	18,238 7 0	18,690 3 5	20,064 3 0	20,156 15 7	20,154 13 6	20,134 5 10	21,016 4 9
Koliabur	...	...	4,363 14 5	4,773 10 6	4,889 0 5	5,048 4 0	5,117 1 8	5,095 4 5	5,095 2 8	5,036 15 0	4,746 0 8
Meekirpar	...	...	5,002 7 10	4,653 15 3	4,933 3 5	5,057 1 0	5,466 10 9	5,607 5 9	5,582 12 3	5,582 12 3	5,337 12 4
Chaporee	...	...	7,391 14 0	8,925 13 0	10,071 5 8	11,011 0 7	11,735 1 11	10,788 4 10	9,434 15 2	10,533 4 4	11,091 15 8
Raha	12,054 14 1	13,716 2 10	14,519 14 0	17,456 10 0	22,712 8 8	23,924 5 2	26,740 1 0	31,543 6 10	31,921 2 6	34,318 6 2	35,112 14 11
Jumoonamookh	3,256 8 6	4,731 10 0	6,246 12 0	7,422 4 0	9,915 0 1	9,757 10 7	10,363 2 2	10,089 2 6	11,637 3 6	11,831 11 7	12,608 15 11
Morung	1,504 0 0	2,000 0 0	2,889 8 0	3,673 8 0	3,970 0 3	4,000 10 6	4,504 5 3	6,073 4 7	5,752 5 2	5,487 4 4	5,081 12 1
Dantipar	...	...	...	3,210 4 0	5,411 7 0	5,865 7 3	6,678 15 9	10,649 11 4	9,169 14 2	9,531 3 2	9,987 1 10
Meekirhill	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,547 7 0	1,526 14 3	1,698 12 11	1,664 4 3
Lakhiraj	...	...	...	...	909 14 3	909 4 3	909 4 3	1,166 3 7	1,185 14 8	1,339 8 6	1,318 3 9
Julkor	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,290 0 0	2,016 4 0	678 6 10	594 0 0
Perbutjoar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,781 0 0	1,785 0 0
Baze Mehal	...	1,702 4 0	2,029 4 0	794 0 0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	43,386 0 5	56,798 4 2½	60,475 9 4	69,049 2 7	81,050 4 9	84,264 8 9	91,519 7 9	103,925 2 5	103,477 5 10	107,953 10 11	110,314 6 2
Increase	...	...	3,686 5 2	8,573 9 3	12,001 2 2	3,214 4 0	7,314 15 0	12,845 10 8	...	4,476 5 1	2,360 11 3
Decrease	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	447 12 7	...	...

E.—*Continued.*

Showing the Net Revenue of each Mehal of Now-Gong, Assam, from 1250 B.S., or 1843-44 A.D. to 1259 B.S., or 1852-53 A.D.

Name of Mehals.	Net Revenue for 1250 B.S., or 1843-44 A.D.	Net Revenue for 1251 B.S., or 1844-45 A.D.	Net Revenue for 1252 B.S., or 1845-46 A.D.	Net Revenue for 1253 B.S., or 1846-47 A.D.	Net Revenue for 1254 B.S., or 1847-48 A.D.	Net Revenue for 1255 B.S., or 1848-49 A.D.	Net Revenue for 1256 B.S., or 1849-50 A.D.	Net Revenue for 1257 B.S., or 1850-51 A.D.	Net Revenue for 1258 B.S., or 1851-52 A.D.	Net Revenue for 1259 B.S., or 1852-53 A.D.
	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.
Now-Gong	21,395 3 9	21,418 13 6	23,142 11 7	23,496 1 7	23,780 4 2	23,767 14 10	24,122 3 10	24,165 13 5	24,219 4 5	24,463 15 2
Koliabur	4,779 11 6	5,004 14 3	5,259 10 2	5,701 14 10	5,821 10 9	5,540 13 6	5,527 5 0	5,637 10 5	5,638 3 11	5,718 14 1
Meekirpar	5,635 6 1	5,854 3 0	5,963 15 5	6,262 7 10	6,328 6 1	6,351 14 11	6,655 11 9	6,625 13 0	6,733 14 4	6,733 14 4
Chaparee	13,015 12 7	13,203 5 10	13,793 8 10	13,469 0 8	12,847 0 2	11,922 14 4	11,739 4 0	11,623 3 2	12,004 9 3	11,269 6 1
Raha	38,644 13 10	40,837 5 0	41,467 4 1	42,915 8 9	42,498 6 1	40,677 6 8	40,474 12 3	41,101 1 5	40,779 6 0	41,298 14 2
Jumoonamookh	14,981 2 3	15,336 8 0	15,412 9 7	15,113 6 7	15,648 0 0	15,862 0 2	15,763 1 2	15,221 8 5	15,105 5 3	15,303 8 10
Morung	6,471 9 6	6,471 9 6	6,299 14 2	5,459 7 6	4,849 0 11	4,723 4 4	4,640 13 3	4,707 4 8	4,441 14 7	4,687 13 2
Dantipar	11,694 14 5	11,933 7 3	11,963 0 0	12,166 13 3	11,848 11 7	11,879 3 1	11,683 9 4	11,714 8 11	11,590 1 11	11,204 14 6
Meekirhill	1,867 14 0	2,819 10 6	3,406 12 7	3,265 11 9	3,074 10 8	2,871 5 7	3,220 10 9	3,211 12 1	2,783 12 7	2,722 2 2
Lakhiraj	2,347 2 4	2,625 12 8	2,858 9 3	2,508 15 11	2,644 10 10	2,525 12 0	2,082 11 8	2,101 11 0	2,061 1 2	2,136 3 7
Julkor	567 0 0	1,294 0 0	1,138 9 3	1,722 0 0	1,889 0 0	1,708 0 0	1,768 0 0	1,656 0 0	1,627 0 0	1,505 0 0
Perbutjoar	1,905 3 0	2,097 10 0	2,087 12 6	2,102 10 0	2,268 6 5	2,168 14 8	2,102 14 4	2,089 15 0	2,000 11 0	3,422 9 0
Baze Mehal	...			...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	123,305 13 3	130,897 3 6	132,793 12 5	134,314 5 8	133,489 7 8	129,999 8 1	129,781 1 4	130,156 5 6	128,985 4 5	130,437 3 1
Increase	12,991 7 1	7,591 6 3	1,896 8 1	1,520 9 3	...	...	...	375 4 2	...	1,451 14 8
Decrease	...	...	...	...	824 14 0	3,459 15 7	218 6 9	...	1,171 1 1	...

F.

Business of Collector's Office.

Office.	In 1257, B.S., or, 1850-51.	In 1258, B.S., or, 1850-51.	Increase.	Decrease.	Remarks.
Native Department.					
Roobukary received	109	183	74	,,	
Roobukary explanation required from Commissioner.....	57	38	,,	19	
Roobukary sent ...	271	171	,,	100	
Yad Dust or Memo	123	108	,,	15	
Report and Petitions	16,356	14,448	,,	1 08	
Summary suit	1,545	1,746	201	,,	
Miscellaneous Perwanahs to Nizirs, Mongahdars, Karrongoe and Treasurer	5,706	6,068	362	,,	
	24,167	22,762	637	2,042	1405 decrease.
English Department.					
Letters despatched.					
Collector's Office ...	237	240	3	,,	
Political.....	279	173	,,	106	
Magistrate.....	132	115	,,	17	
Principal Assistant Commissioner ...	59	54	,,	5	
	707	582	3	128	Actual decrease 125 letters.

G.

Statement showing the Receipts and Charges for the

Receipts:	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
Land Revenue, net	122,573	12	10			
Capitation Tax	4,784	7	7			
Revenue realized from Land discovered after the settlement was made	888	8	0			
				128,246	12	5
Gold washings				0	0	0
Fisheries				1,627	0	0
Abkary (sale proceeds)				2,947	8	0
Post-office				801	15	0
Savings from Establishment fixed				31	11	7
Contingencies, Stationery, Boxes, &c.				43	5	10
Pound Fund				298	0	3
Fines				1,078	5	5
Ferries				1,278	4	0
Town Tax				563	10	4
Premium at 1 per cent. on issuing drafts				5	9	6
Revenue Record Fund				21	14	0
Uncovenanted Service Family Pension Fund				441	6	0
Presents				186	8	6
Marriage Fees				5	8	0
Unclaimed Property, and Cattle sold				64	8	6
Deceased's Property sold				15	15	11
Stolen Property sold				31	13	6
Cost of Nonsuit Cases				30	10	0
Cost of English Paper furnished				41	10	0
Gambling Property seized and sold				46	5	3
Bribe given to Amlah				13	8	0

Grand Total ..... Company's Rupees 137,821 14 0

G.

District of Now-Gong, Assam, for the Year 1852 A.D.

DISBURSEMENTS:	RS.	A.	P.	RS.	A.	P.
Salaries of Covenanted Assistants for the whole year	15,358	4	1			
Travelling and Deputation allowance	725	0	0			
				16,083	4	1
Salaries of Uncovenanted Assistants for ditto	14,229	10	9			
Travelling and Deputation allowance	318	12	8			
				14,548	7	5
Political Establishment						
Contingent for ditto	2,699	5	6			
				2,699	5	6
Judicial Criminal Establishment, fixed	4,266	0	0			
Contingent for ditto, ditto	312	11	0			
				4,578	11	0
Judicial Civil Establishment, fixed	4,825	10	0			
Contingent for ditto, ditto	51	4	8			
				4,876	14	8
Revenue Establishment, fixed	8,640	0	0			
Contingent for ditto, ditto	749	13	3			
				9,389	13	3
Police Establishment, fixed	6,606	5	10			
Contingent for ditto, ditto	263	7	0			
				6,869	12	10
Jail Establishment, fixed	780	0	0			
Contingent for ditto, ditto	4,029	10	8			
				4,809	10	8
Medical Establishment, fixed	2,795	10	8			
Contingent for ditto, ditto	10	4	9			
				2,805	15	5
Militia				12,536	12	8
Pensions				336	12	0
Post Office Establishment, fixed	828	0	0			
Contingent for ditto, ditto	35	3	0			
				863	3	0
School Establishment, fixed	1,084	0	0			
Contingent for ditto, ditto						
				1,084	0	0
Fine remitted				30	0	0
Overseer's salary at Golaghaut, including horse allowance				400	0	0
Repair of Roads, Bunds, and Buildings, other than in the Executive Department				656	0	0
Total Company's Rupees				82,568	10	6
In favour of Government				55,253	3	6
Grand Total Company's Rupees				137,821	14	0

H.

A General Statement showing the number of Monzahs, Villages, Houses, Castes, Population, and Revenue Puttahs in each Mehal of the Now-Gong District, for the year 1257 B.S., or 1850-51 A.D.

No. of Mehal.	Names of Mehals.	1 Monzahs.	2 Total Villages.	3 Brahmin Houses.	4 Kyvet Houses.	5 Gunnick Houses.	6 Koletah Houses.	7 Keot Houses.	8 Koach Houses.	9 Kamar Houses.	10 Koonar Houses.	11 Puteah Houses.	Chootia Houses.	Burio Houses.	Pogoee Houses.	Doom Houses.	Choral Houses.	Nott Houses.	Musalman Houses.
1	Now-Gong	30	90	545	84	6	1,683	1,112	992	27	82	148	244	977	78	460	45	111	268
2	Koliabur	11	24	105	99	...	946	302	196	2	95	4	9	87	45	90	...	19	34
3	Meekirpor.....	9	32	55	18	1	153	152	215	20	23	40	173	113	51	78	1	4	92
4	Chaporee	21	83	215	83	3	1,035	841	627	10	43	54	220	326	265	500	21	41	67
5	Raha	47	211	251	128	109	795	784	4,101	26	26	70	418	69	1,573	1,322	594	13	1,090
6	Jumoonamookh .	28	57	41	14	...	100	145	1,069	...	40	18	185	97	144	190	253	9	333
7	Morung.....	6	32	56	23	4	329	147	277	...	29	26	160	20	47	302	...	...	49
8	Lakhiraj	30	30	186	46	3	366	172	500	40	43	...	43	48	85	162	36	12	3
9	Dantipor	10	47	21	9	...	51	80	555	...	3	...	6	14	29	277	183	...	80
10	Meekirhills	16	160	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
11	Perbutjoar	70	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Total.....	278	766	1,475	504	126	5,458	3,735	8,532	125	384	360	1,458	1,751	2,317	3,384	1,133	209	2,016
12	Angahmee Nagah	78	78	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
13	Rengmana Nagah	32	32	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Grand Total...	388	876	1,475	504	126	5,458	3,735	8,532	125	384	360	1,458	1,751	2,317	3,384	1,133	209	2,016

H.—*Continued.*

A General Statement showing the number of Monzahs, Villages, Houses, Castes, Population, and Revenue Puttahs in each Mehal of the Now-Gong District, for the year 1257 B S., or 1850-51 A.D.

No. of Mehal.	Names of Mehals.	19 Mann Houses.	20 Lowaree Houses.	21 Kyah Houses.	22 Kansoree Houses.	23 Ahoom Houses.	24 Moria Houses.	25 Haree Houses.	26 Shan Houses.	27 Khachary Houses.	28 Dhobo Houses.	29 Lalong Houses.	30 Meekir Houses.	31 Burmha Houses.	32 Chuttry Houses.	33 Nagah Houses.	34 Kookee Houses.	35 Meekir Houses.	36 Khassio Houses.	37 Total of Houses.	38 Number of Persons, calculating five persons to each house.	39 Number of Puttahs.
1	Now-Gong.....	...	...	23	...	173	44	35	67	75	118	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7,395	36,985	9,122
2	Koliabur	...	54	5	...	63	51	...	...	33	8	...	...	...	...	...	...	18	...	2,265	11,325	2,679
3	Mekirpor	...	3	1	2	338	...	5	1	241	8	238	...	...	1	...	...	100	...	2,127	10,635	2,466
4	Chaporee	...	7	1	3	105	117	41	2	161	36	337	...	...	...	...	...	...	20	5,181	25,905	5,673
5	Raha	...	7	5	17	224	7	79	16	502	13	2,064	327	...	10	...	...	...	...	14,640	73,200	15,787
6	Jumoonamookh..	20	...	4	...	109	31	23	...	822	209	353	284	12	...	...	...	...	15	4,520	22,600	5,293
7	Morung	...	...	...	...	735	57	5	...	315	16	...	...	...	...	...	...	94	...	2,691	13,455	2,782
8	Lakhiraj	...	40	...	...	21	...	1	...	...	1	103	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,914	9,570	...
9	Dantipor	...	...	5	9	23	6	5	...	90	2	1,285	300	...	...	...	...	...	30	3,063	15,315	3,555
10	Meekirhills	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,722	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,722	8,610	1,722
11	Perbutjoar.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,022	...	...	364	...	...	702	2,181	...	...	4,269	21,345	...
	Total.....	20	111	44	31	1,791	313	194	86	3,261	411	5,380	2,997	12	11	702	2,181	212	65	49,792	248,965	49,079
12	Angahmee Nagah	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	20,139	...	...	...	20,139	100,695	...
13	Rengmana Nagah	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	689	...	...	...	689	3,445	...
	Grand Total...	20	111	44	31	1,791	313	194	86	3,261	411	5,380	2,997	12	11	21,530	2,181	212	65	70,620	353,105	49,079

I.

Statistics of Assam.—July 1853.

Number.	Name of Zillah.	Total Area including Hills and Forests.	Area of Cultivation.	Population.	Net Revenue.	Number of Inhabitants in one square mile of cultivation.	Amount Taxation on each Inhabitant.
		SQ. MILES.	SQ. MILES.	LAKHS.	RS. A. P.	AVERAGE.	RS. A. P.
1	Kamroop	3,345	562	387,775	295,993 3 9	690	0 12 8
2	Now-Gong	8,712	276	241,300	130,437 3 1	874	0 8 8
3	Durring	2,844	346¾	185,569	152,795 6 9	535	0 13 3
4	Seebasghur	5,440	256¼	159,573	119,032 6 4	623	0 12 0
5	Luckimpore	9,900	134	85,296	43,714 1 1	637	0 8 0
	Total of Assam (proper)	30,241	1,575	1,059,513	741,972 5 0	672	0 11 0
6	Gowalparah	4,104	677	141,638	12,836 3 8	209	0 1 6
	Grand Total of the Province under the Commissioner of Assam	34,345	2,252	1,201,151	754,808 8 8		